

THE LAY OF THE LAND: EVALUATION PRACTICE IN CANADA IN 2009

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Abstract: A group of 12 evaluation practitioners and observers takes stock of the state of program evaluation in Canada. Each contributor provides a personal viewpoint, based on his or her own experience in the field. The selection of contributors constitutes a purposive sample aimed at providing depth of view and a variety of perspectives. Each presentation highlights one strength of program evaluation practiced in Canada, one weakness, one threat, and one opportunity. It is concluded that Canadian evaluation has matured in many ways since 2003 (when a first panel scan was conducted): professional designation is a reality; the infrastructure is stronger than ever; organizations are more focused on results. Still, evaluation is weakened by lacunas in advanced education and professional development, limited resources, lack of independence, rigidity in evaluation approaches, and lack of self-assessment. While the demand for evaluation and evaluators appears on the rise, the supply of evaluators and the financial resources to conduct evaluations are not. The collective definition of the field of evaluation still lacks clarity. There is also reassurance in looking toward the future. With increased appetite for evaluation, evaluators could make a real difference, especially if evaluators adopt a more systemic view of program action to offer a global understanding of organizational effectiveness. The implementation of a Certified Evaluator designation by CES is a major opportunity to position evaluation as a more credible discipline.

Résumé : Un groupe de douze praticiens et observateurs de l'évaluation fait le point sur l'état de l'évaluation de programme au Canada. Chaque collaborateur fournit un point de vue personnel, selon sa propre expérience dans le domaine. L'équipe de collaborateurs constitue un échantillon choisi à dessein pour fournir profondeur de vue et variété de perspectives. Chaque présentation met en évidence une force de l'évaluation de programme pratiquée au Canada, une faiblesse, une menace et une opportunité. On conclut que la pratique de l'évaluation au Canada a évolué à bien des égards depuis 2003 (quand un premier portrait avait été dressé) : un titre professionnel existe, l'infrastructure est plus solide que jamais, les organisations sont davantage axées sur les résultats. Pourtant, l'évaluation est affaiblie par des lacunes dans l'enseignement postsecondaire et dans le perfectionnement professionnel, par des ressources limitées, par le manque d'indépendance, par une rigidité des approches d'évaluation ainsi que par le manque d'auto-évaluation. Alors que la demande d'évaluation et d'évaluateurs semble augmenter, la disponibilité d'évaluateurs et de ressources financières pour mener les évaluations stagnent. La définition collective du domaine de l'évaluation manque encore de clarté. Un regard porté vers l'avenir se fait cependant rassurant. L'appétit croissant pour l'évaluation donne l'occasion aux

évaluateurs de faire une réelle différence, surtout s'ils adoptent une vision plus systémique de l'intervention des programmes et une compréhension globale de l'efficacité organisationnelle. La mise en place d'un titre d'évaluateur accrédité donne à la SCÉ une occasion importante de positionner l'évaluation comme une discipline crédible. Une annexe présente une synthèse en français des conclusions de cet article.

■ In 2003, a group of 12 seasoned evaluators took stock of the state of program evaluation in Canada and subsequently published their observations and analyses in an article entitled "The Lay of the Land: Evaluation Practice in Canada Today" (Gauthier et al., 2004). Each contributor provided a personal viewpoint, based on his or her own experience in the field. Each presentation highlighted one strength of program evaluation practiced in Canada, one weakness, one threat, and one opportunity. The group concluded that evaluators possessed skills that other professions do not offer (they have a niche) but that program evaluation had not acquired an identity of its own. Dominated by program monitoring, program evaluation lacked self-identity and connection with management needs. The authors identified significant opportunities—results-based and outcome-based management, advocacy and partnership efforts, individual training and development, and bridging between program management and policy development represented some. The article proposed the blueprint of a work plan for evaluators individually and collectively.

Six years later, the same group assembled to repeat the exercise and to compare and contrast the situation of program evaluation in Canada in 2009 with that described in the 2004 article. As was the case then, each contributor provided a personal viewpoint, based on his or her own experience in the field; perspectives varied by career length (contributors' careers having been initiated at various times over the last 30 years), geography, and the organizational role of the observer (i.e., internal evaluator, consultant, arms-length analyst). We did not shy away from the subjectivity of the exercise; it was designed as such. Our selection of contributors does not constitute a random sample of practitioners but rather a purposive sample aimed at providing depth of view and a variety of perspectives. We were hoping for tension, contradiction, and debate; we discovered a series of complementary views of the evaluation environment that demonstrates the richness of the field.

Each presentation highlights one strength of program evaluation practiced in Canada, one weakness, one threat, and one opportu-

nity. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to program evaluation, while threats and opportunities stem from the environment in which program evaluation evolves. This framework is the same that was used to prepare the 2004 article; it was proposed to ensure positive views (strengths and opportunities) as well as critical concerns (weaknesses and threats) and to bring forward outside-in dimensions (opportunities and threats) as well as inside-out issues (strengths and weaknesses). Following individual presentations, we provide a concluding synthesis of the observations and implications of the views of our panel.

This document is significant in that it brings together perspectives from across Canada. Canadian evaluation is at a major crossroads given the pressures to professionalize and the Canadian Evaluation Society's responses to these pressures. The views of the panellists can be contrasted with the snapshot taken 6 years ago. In a sense, it allows a multiple-perspective, longitudinal view that is rarely documented in our field. Taking a second snapshot also gives us an opportunity to assess the work done since 2003 and to redefine a path for action in the profession that is evaluation.

A Western Canadian Perspective

Robert Malatest

Consultant, Victoria, British Columbia

Six years have elapsed already, although it seems that this panel just recently convened. It is good to get together as a group to collectively report on our "experiences" in terms of practicing program evaluation in Canada.

A strength: Looking back to our findings of 2003, I am heartened that there has been some improvement in planning for evaluation in Canada. In fact, the increase in evaluability assessment projects suggests that evaluation activities are starting (but just starting) to be incorporated into program design. This is not to say that evaluation assessments have become mainstream for many of the studies completed by our firm, but it is a start.

A weakness: Evaluation assignments too often have too few resources allowed to enable researchers to do a proper job of estimating net program impacts. Due to limited resources, many evaluation studies have gone from a pre/post research design, including an intervention and comparison group, to a post-implementation study. Too often we can't do a proper job due to limited resources.

Opportunities: Evaluation funders have become more aware of the range of evaluation processes. We have all read (and in some cases, written) evaluation reports that present carefully worded conclusions based on weak or questionable lines of evidence. Evaluation funders are now beginning to realize the importance of adopting more rigorous evaluation approaches—in some instances, even advocating for expanded research design like random assignment.

Threats: There are many. We have seen an almost system-wide shutdown of contracted evaluations in British Columbia due to government restraint initiatives. I fear that independent program evaluation specialists in British Columbia will soon benefit from an endangered species designation. While not too many members of the general public or bureaucracy will lose sleep over this issue, the pool of practicing, independent evaluators in British Columbia will likely shrink in the coming years. This will, in turn, have negative ramifications for “independent” arms-length evaluation, and will also limit the extent to which clients will be able to draw on the experience of evaluators who have diverse skill sets and experiences with respect to program evaluation.

An Academic Point of View

James C. McDavid

Professor, British Columbia

I adopt a national perspective and I use British Columbia's circumstances to illustrate some trends and issues.

A strength: The Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) has committed itself to a process that will help to distinguish evaluators from other management consulting and auditing professionals. In the 2004 article, *The Lay of the Land* (Gauthier et al., 2004), several authors pointed to the lack of identity as a weakness or a threat to the practice of evaluation. Evaluation was seen as competing with or even being subsumed by audit and/or management consulting. The CES Professional Designations Project, currently being implemented by CES, can be viewed as a response to this problem (Canadian Evaluation Society National Council, 2007). Since May 2010, members of the Society have been able to earn a Credentialed Evaluator (CE) designation. Interest in such a credential is strong (Gauthier, Kishchuk, Borys, & Roy, 2006), and the implementation of the CE designation will offer practitioners (both government employees and consultants) one means to build a career in evaluation.

A weakness: The lack of education and training opportunities for persons wanting to become evaluators is a continuing problem. In the 2004 *Lay of the Land* report, Robert Lahey pointed out that, to implement the (then) Treasury Board Evaluation (TBS) Policy, there would need to be an infusion of human resources, more training for new and existing evaluators, and (implicitly) more resources to support the evaluation function in the federal government of Canada. In April 2009, Treasury Board of Canada unveiled a new Evaluation Policy (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009) that broadens the existing mandate to evaluate programs. A 5-year cycle is envisioned to evaluate all programs (or clusters of programs). Although no new resources have been budgeted to meet these requirements, the expectation is that deputy heads will allocate the resources within their budgets. Anticipating a growing need for training and education opportunities, TBS is supporting the Consortium of Universities for Evaluation Education—an organization created in 2008 to organize and increase opportunities to acquire graduate-level education and training in evaluation.

A threat: Evaluation is a diverse body of theory and practice, with differing views of the proper scope and methods for evaluation practice. In the 2004 *Lay of the Land* article, Mason and Gauthier both pointed to a lack of rigour in evaluation practice. Other contributors to the 2004 article pointed to the overlap among auditing, management consulting, and evaluation as a problem—what distinguishes evaluation from other, similar, professions?

Collectively, we do not agree on what defines us as a profession. Notwithstanding the current efforts by CES to identify competencies for evaluators as a part of the Professional Designations Project, there is a substantial problem in identifying and agreeing on what is core to our profession. Jim Cullen raised an issue in the 2004 *Lay of the Land* article that I think is critical for all evaluators: he pointed to the need to focus more on attribution as a key part of evaluations. This same issue was highlighted by Peter Aucoin in his paper prepared for the Centre for Excellence for Evaluation, Treasury Board Secretariat (Aucoin, 2005).

Among the things that evaluators claim to be able to do, two stand out: assess or judge whether the intended outcomes of a program have been achieved, and assess or judge whether the observed outcomes were caused by the program or policy. The first claim is not unique

to evaluators—accountants, auditors, and management consultants, among others, claim they can assess the effectiveness of programs, that is, the extent to which programs achieve intended results. But what distinguishes evaluators is the knowledge and skills needed to address attribution-related questions about programs and policies. Currently, there is no agreement among us about what being able to address attribution questions entails.

We must tackle this issue if we are to have something that distinguishes us, and therefore, makes us unique as practitioners. Scriven (2008), among others, points out that working with cause-and-effect relationships does not entail embracing randomized control trials as the gold standard for evaluations. Scriven also points out that exercising judgement is critical in evaluations—it is not possible to do an evaluation that does not entail many judgements (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006). We evaluators have not self-consciously developed the knowledge and skills that are required to exercise robust professional judgement. This is not a simple issue; John Mayne's (2001) writings on contribution analysis are an important source of reflection on this topic.

An opportunity: Performance measurement has dominated the evaluation scene in Canada for well over a decade. In some jurisdictions, program evaluation has been pushed aside in preference to measuring and reporting performance, specifically the achievement of outcomes (McDavid, 2006). Recently, a growing chorus of scepticism, among public sector and nonprofit managers and executives as well as among academics, is challenging the claims made by advocates for performance measurement (Aucoin & Jarvis, 2005; Auditor General of Canada, 2005; Behn, 2002; de Lancer Julnes, 2006; de Waal, 2003; Dluhy, 2006; Government Accountability Office, 2005; Halachmi, 2002, 2005; Holzer & Kolby, 2005; Hood & Peters, 2004; Ingraham, 2005; Moynihan, 2002, 2006; Robinson, 2003; Schwartz & Mayne, 2005; Steele, 2005; Thomas, 2006, 2008; Van de Walle & Bovaird, 2007).

Sensible performance measurement is not a one-size-fits-all panacea. Evaluators who are trained to understand the technical and the organizational cultural limitations to measuring performance can and should be positioning themselves to offer a more “balanced ticket” of evaluation options that includes but is not limited to performance measurement.

Program Evaluation in Alberta

Gail V. Barrington

Consultant, Calgary, Alberta

Six years have gone by and evaluators in Alberta appear to be more optimistic than they were previously, mainly as a result of reading the environment and seeing the urgent needs that currently exist. A brief Internet survey of Alberta evaluators was conducted in May 2009, and, despite the fact that the turnaround time was short, 23 enthusiastic evaluators were willing to share their views.

Strengths: The Alberta evaluators identified several key strengths in evaluation today. Foremost is the fact that evaluation is valued in our province by both senior government officials and grassroots agencies. It has a higher profile than ever before and has been built into regular program planning and management processes in a number of organizations. The drive for improved effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the focus on outcomes, has fuelled this demand. In fact, as one respondent stated, evaluation is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. Fortunately, this heightened awareness of evaluation is coupled with the availability of a cadre of experienced senior evaluators who are ready to take on the challenge. Evaluation training is also perceived to be more accessible and better supported by employers than in the past, although it tends to be urban in focus. Rural and remote evaluators do not feel well served.

Weaknesses: Two key weaknesses are also evident. The first is that current views of evaluation tend to be rigid. The focus is on logic models and performance measurement. Evaluation is used to appease funders, and their emphasis is on accountability. Little attention or energy is expended on more innovative approaches such as developmental evaluation, reflective thinking, and organizational learning. There seems to be a lack of understanding of the broader roles that evaluation can play. Interestingly, the other main weakness has to do with ourselves—the variability of our experience and the quality of our work. There is a concern that some evaluators rely on a rote set of techniques without the body of content knowledge required to support true evaluation utility. Health care was identified as an area where a lack of experienced evaluators is apparent.

Opportunities: Based on this perspective, respondents were clear about two main opportunities that currently exist. The first is the economic downturn and the associated changes in government, such

as the major reorganization of the Alberta health care system, a frequently cited example. The flip side of this issue is that it is also a golden opportunity for evaluators to demonstrate both their skills and the utility of evaluation. Certainly the appetite for, and commitment to, evaluation has grown significantly over the past six years. What is important to the Canadian Evaluation Society is that Alberta evaluators see the move to a certification process as another significant opportunity. Certification is both timely and necessary. It will allow us to build our credibility, address the lack of disciplinary knowledge, and raise the quality of our work. A common body of knowledge, well-publicized standards, and a recognized designation will go a long way to addressing these identified needs.

Threat: The main threat seen by Alberta colleagues seems to be the preponderance of underqualified individuals who are marketing themselves as evaluators without the theoretical knowledge required to do a good job. Indeed, while there is a group of well experienced, trained (and dare I say, aging) evaluators in the province, the question has been raised as to whether or not they are a closed circle. How easy is it to become involved? Why are there so many practicing evaluators in the province who do not belong to CES?

Thus, the opportunity exists for CES to address the certification and training needs of evaluators and to build capacity among evaluation users. Awareness needs to be raised in the community, a broader audience reached, the value of using trained evaluators clearly articulated, and strategies for sound yet cost-effective evaluation solutions promoted. For Alberta evaluators, as never before, the time is now.

Faces of Evaluation

Greg Mason

Consultant, Winnipeg, Manitoba

A strength: Evaluation as an academic discipline, in contrast to evaluation as practiced in Canada, exhibits increased self-confidence and methodological maturity. Diverse methods and increasingly varied cultural perspectives are offering evaluators a smorgasbord of tools and techniques with which to analyze purposeful intervention in the social, economic, and environmental condition. While some disciplines, notably economics, remain resolutely aloof from the rapidly evolving methodological pluralism, concepts such as “cultural competence,” “transformative paradigm,” and “intersection of race/gender/disability” pose both opportunities and threats for evalua-

tors. The opportunity is that evaluations have increasing capacity to shed light on social and economic processes—evaluators often have access to key data on these processes and can explicate and test new theories of social and economic change using these tools. The threats arise from the plethora of new methods that often present old wine in new bottles. Separating valid perspectives from posers wrapped in a pseudo-scientific veneer can be a full-time job.

Weaknesses: The significant weakness in Canadian evaluation is the dominant role the federal government has in funding and defining evaluation. The federal model, as typified by what appears to be the rote methodology (consisting of document/file review, literature review, interviews, focus groups and case studies), masquerades as truth-seeking under the banner of multiple lines of evidence. It is also apparent that evaluation has drifted close to becoming a form of audit, and the standards of validity reflect a dangerous naivety. As an example, it is apparent that many evaluation managers do not know how to use interviews in an evaluation. Directions in requests for proposals (RFPs) often seem to treat interviews as a limited form of sample survey. The outlier opinion is not assessed on its own merit but is often discarded, under the notion that only majority views have value. Some advice, such as not including quotes in a report, eliminates the “voice” of the program client and manager and runs completely counter to the emerging methods. Other examples of methodological narrowness abound. If I were to identify one agent of responsibility in changing this, it would be the Canadian Evaluation Society. Defining standards of professional practice logically precedes any attempt at creating a professional organization.

An opportunity: A significant opportunity exists for evaluation in Canada with the new policy on evaluation. The notion that all spending should be subject to evaluation is a significant opportunity for the profession. Yes, capacity is a serious constraint, and so it is incumbent on evaluators to redefine evaluation.

I suggest that we “unpack” the Treasury Board quartet of rationale/relevance, design/delivery, success/impacts, and cost-effectiveness, and define targeted studies that examine one or two of these elements within a study. The rationale/relevance issue is especially poorly executed. If done correctly, evaluations should question the foundation of the program or policy, and very few evaluations go there.

Evaluation needs to define three issues:

- *Rationale*, with relevance and design subsumed, is a policy question, which should be asked at the outset and then periodically re-asked as part of program review, possibly every 5 years. Program managers should have limited input into this issue because they can only offer self-serving perspectives. The output of this exercise should flow to the policy unit and then to the deputy minister.
- *Delivery* is all about program management, and in my experience program managers often have valuable insight. This issue should be examined annually as part of normal reporting. Evaluators, especially those that have reviewed many programs, offer important perspectives and insights on improving implementation. This function also aligns naturally with internal audit; however, evaluations rarely use this information.
- *Impact* or net impact is the essence of the evaluation question, which asks whether the cost of public resources committed to the program have returned social benefits of greater value. The energy of external and academic evaluators should focus on this question and provide advice to senior management. These studies should be commissioned on “large” programs and issues with proper attention to data development and implementation. These studies will be occasional and not placed on a schedule, but developed as data allow. Too much high-powered statistical analysis is wasted on garbage data.

A threat: The opportunities presented by the new evaluation policy (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009) will quickly evaporate, however, if evaluation as practiced in Canada does not change. This is the greatest threat, and I see little evidence that evaluation in Canada can transform itself in order to, in the words of Muhammad Ali, “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee.” The structures of the Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks and Risk-based Audit Frameworks (RMAF/RBAFs), the evaluation framework, and the quartet of evaluation issues are the touchstone—I would expect considerable resistance to changing the model.

One final thought is important. At the core of the evaluation task is an assessment of the value of programs. In a government setting, this means the assessment of the value for money received by using taxpayer funds for a social purpose. The Department of Finance calculates that it costs 30¢ to raise \$1 of public funds. The collective benefit of spending that dollar must exceed both the cost of collecting

the funds and the costs of delivering the programming. In the academic literature or even at conferences, I see very little mention of the fiduciary responsibility that an evaluator of public programs has to the taxpayer. Only by clearly identifying the beneficiaries (citizens) and the funders (taxpayers), and addressing our research to these “clients,” does the evaluation enterprise offer value.

How Much Has Changed?

Sandra L. Bozzo

Provincial Public Servant, Toronto, Ontario

In reflecting on the state of evaluation in Ontario in 2009, I take into account my observations from 2003 and present a perspective that is grounded in my evaluation experiences in provincial government to date. In particular, I consider government direction and pockets of evaluative approaches across the Ontario government.

A strength: The focus on results. There is an appetite for outcomes data and a real interest in measuring progress. The evolving socio-political and economic environments have, without a doubt, demanded transparency in government spending. The scope of evaluation has broadened substantially since 2003, incorporating a more comprehensive perspective that includes social impacts (and going beyond efficiencies). While approaches to evaluation or the evaluation lexicon may differ across the landscape of government, there is a clear intention to systematically define achievements or results. This is indicative of government and senior executive commitment that is a necessary precursor for gaining acceptance in order to move forward with an evaluation plan and evaluative-type activities. We are definitely on the right track.

A weakness: The reality of partner engagement. We may be able to get things started, but can we really make them happen? We may be moving in the right direction, but are we taking our partners with us? Faced with initiatives that are cross-cutting in nature and involve multiple stakeholders, complex networks, and funding, getting to a formal agreement to proceed often becomes a project in itself. This is more related to managing relationships and partner expectations than it is about finding smarter means for engaging partners. Key, and often influential, internal or external partners may stifle processes when the risks of knowing evaluation results appear greater than the repercussions of not fully reporting on them. This is not solely about getting the right people in the room. We know that high turnout at committee meetings does not always equate with high engagement

among our partners. Processes are often fraught with turnover of staff on committees, competing priorities, and parallel or duplicate evaluation activities. Establishing an agreement among partners to undertake an evaluation and actualizing engagement in evaluation remain the largest challenges in 2009.

An opportunity: The “age of Twitter.” If anything has changed since 2003, it is the speed with which information is required to support government transparency and accountability reporting. The new world of social networking has changed government’s challenges with respect to understanding the results of programs, initiatives, and strategies, with timelines for reporting often defined in monthly, quarterly, and fiscal-year terms. If sharing dependable information (more rapidly than ever before) has become the norm, how are evaluators adapting or keeping pace with this change and what tools or approaches do we have to offer? In what ways can we work with other professionals to respond to real-time information needs? I am not proposing that we compromise all comprehensive evaluations. However, we need to reflect on simplifying, streamlining, and addressing evaluation needs efficiently, while accepting flexibility in our approaches and avoiding the gap being filled by other professionals positioning themselves as evaluators.

A threat: The limited resources. On this front, not much has changed. Considering the time, human, and financial resources required to undertake more rigorous evaluations, coupled with the apparent lack of resources in government for evaluation activities, evaluators may find it difficult to get anything done. I would suggest that this situation challenges evaluators to be more creative in responding to evaluation needs in government. A measured response would include broader distribution of tools and resources, development of a wider range of methodological options, and capacity building to enable government to undertake evaluative activities and interpret findings. Overall, we may need to get back to the basics in terms of advocating for the value of evaluation.

Push and Pull

Nancy L. Porteous

Federal Public Servant, Ottawa, Ontario

A strength: Individual evaluators and organizations continue to show leadership in promoting the field of evaluation. Here are three examples.

- A small group of experienced evaluators have been advancing the idea of an Evaluator General for Canada to stimulate discussion about the role and effectiveness of the evaluation function in the Government of Canada (D'Aloisio et al., 2007). They posit that an independent Officer of Parliament is needed to conduct high-level and cross-cutting overviews of program effectiveness.
- The Canadian Evaluation Society Educational Fund is a charity established to offer scholarships, awards, mentoring opportunities, and competitions to raise awareness of the field and to reduce some of the financial barriers for students and new evaluators to advance their knowledge and skills in evaluation.
- Departments are creating their own programs to recruit, train, and retain evaluation specialists; for example, the Public Health Agency of Canada has developed an evaluation stream as part of its EC Development Program, an on-the-job training initiative for the job category to which many evaluators belong (see http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/php-psp/esdp_about-eng.php).

A weakness: Evaluating our own relevance and performance. Unfortunately, we are not very good at practicing what we preach. How many evaluations examining the evaluation function have you seen lately? In each of our evaluation shops, we need to clearly articulate the logic model for our own enterprise, to put in place a solid monitoring system to track delivery of key outputs, and to evaluate periodically the difference we make.

An opportunity: The renewal of the federal Expenditure Management System, which describes the approach to budget planning and decision-making in the federal government (see http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/Pubs_pol/opepubs/TB_H/EXMA1-4E.asp). There are two key drivers.

First, there is the Treasury Board Policy on Evaluation (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009). A new government-wide evaluation policy came into effect in April 2009. The most prominent feature is the requirement for departments to evaluate all direct program spending every five years. The long-anticipated launch of this renewed policy created many opportunities: increased leverage within departments, since heads of evaluation can wave the stick of needing to comply with a strengthened Treasury Board policy; a rallying point within the federal community as the policy led to the creation of an informal

network of federal directors and directors general of evaluation; and a more formal (albeit not entirely clear) role in performance measurement where evaluation shops are to be consulted on performance measurement issues and are required to assess annually the health of performance measurement in support of evaluation.

Second, Strategic Reviews, which began in 2007, require departments to undergo a detailed assessment of all spending every four years. Faced with the requirement to report detailed information on relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness, many senior managers realized the true paucity of evidence at their disposal for substantiating expenditure decisions. This has raised the profile and demand for evaluation within many federal departments. The Strategic Review questions are our traditional evaluation questions—evaluators have the knowledge and skills to take an active role within departmental Strategic Review exercises. We should seize this opportunity to raise awareness of the value and potential of evaluation as well as foster better use of evaluative evidence.

A threat: The renewal of the federal Expenditure Management System (again). Despite best intentions, the new Treasury Board Policy on Evaluation may inadvertently render the evaluation function less valued and useful. Different timelines for various processes do not align. For example:

- the *Federal Accountability Act* directs that all grant and contribution programs be reviewed at least every 5 years to ensure their relevance and effectiveness; this clock started in December 2006 (see <<http://www.faa-lfi.gc.ca/aa-lfi/aa-lfipr-eng.asp>>);
- the Evaluation Policy initiated a 5-year cycle that began in April 2009 (coverage requirement commences in April 2013); and
- the Strategic Review started the first round of the 4-year cycle in 2007.

Also, the new policy's requirement to evaluate 100% of direct program spending over a 5-year cycle may not necessarily produce evaluations delivered at the right level or at the right time to actually inform planning and decision-making.

The new policy to support a renewed evaluation function was not accompanied by additional resources (unlike the case of internal audit,

where significant new resources were put in place to support the new policy). We may be setting ourselves up to fail.

Renewed Policies and Evaluator Mobility

Simon Roy

Consultant, Ottawa, Ontario

The social, economic, and institutional environments in which we evolve constantly bring in new challenges and opportunities for our profession. At the federal government level, human resource changeovers and policy changes have been key drivers of change at various levels these last few years.

Strengths: Evaluation and the evaluation community benefit from a number of strengths on the federal government scene. One worth noting is the presence of a growing evaluation culture among public servants working outside traditional evaluation units. Over the last 8 to 10 years, I have observed growing knowledge of program evaluation principles as well as an increasing awareness of the importance of results-based management among program and other non-evaluation staff that often facilitated the evaluation process and improved performance measurement practices within programs.

Although this trend probably originated many years ago, two recent factors may have accelerated the expansion of evaluative thinking among non-evaluators. The first factor stems from policy. As a result of changes to the Policy on Transfer Payments (see <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=13525>), the obligation for grants and contributions programs to develop an evaluation and performance framework has increased the reach of evaluation over the last decade. Many framework development teams have used participatory approaches to develop logic models and identify performance indicators, leading many public servants to think about program-to-outcome causality and the importance of evaluation research to assess this causality.

The second factor relates to human resource mobility. Many government evaluators have left the profession to move on to other positions within the public service, and vice versa. While many observers have expressed concerns about the high turnover rate among evaluators, staff exchanges between evaluation and non-evaluation groups has also contributed to expanding the general level of knowledge about program evaluation. Exchanges among sectors and departments have also helped evaluation units learn about practices used in other sectors.

Weaknesses: While awareness and knowledge of evaluation are gaining ground, the capacity to actually conduct evaluation is unfortunately limited and can hardly meet the demand for evaluation studies with credible results. This is especially true in the area of cost-effectiveness analyses. We often hear of a lack of capacity to conduct evaluations involving quasi-experimental designs. In my view, such designs are only really applicable to a limited number of programs for various reasons beyond our control as evaluators. However, recent trends and policies require evaluation to assess the economy of all programs, which in essence refers to the analysis of the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of programs. Most evaluators have backgrounds in social sciences and have limited skills to actually quantify results in economic or even non-economic terms. They also lack expertise to properly analyze financial information. Many find it difficult to conduct complex impact analyses of programs in view of their costs.

I would also argue that, contrary to popular belief, program evaluation lacks capacity to conduct useful formative evaluations. While evaluators are pretty good at assessing preliminary results, many evaluators lack the methodological expertise to assess program processes effectively and differently than audit. Many evaluators use inductive approaches, using their own judgement (or, worse, those of their interview respondents) to assess delivery approaches, without any objective basis to make such judgements. I think that this is one of the reasons that formative evaluations have lost ground in the federal government these last few years. Collectively, we need to reflect on how to make use of comparative approaches not only to assess results but also to assess processes, delivery, and governance structures.

Opportunity: Looking forward, a number of opportunities exist for the program evaluation community. While human resource capacity is a major concern and will probably continue to be so for the coming years, the arrival of a new generation of evaluators can also be seen as an opportunity to review and improve our practice. Retiring baby-boomer evaluators are gradually being replaced by young (and not so young) evaluators with various backgrounds, many with excellent research skills. I find that they often challenge us with fresh views, and this should be seen as an excellent opportunity for the profession to review and improve its ways of doing evaluation. Evaluation today faces many challenges, including diminishing response rates, rising expectations, and limited resources. Young graduates arrive in our community with high academic standards and fresh new ideas that

can help us tackle these issues or at least think about them. Many newcomers are highly knowledgeable and open to new approaches, such as data-gathering methodologies based on Web and multimode approaches. The changing of the guard should, in my view, be seen not only as a challenge but also as an opportunity to explore new ways of conducting evaluation.

Threats: In April 2009, Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada launched its new Evaluation Policy that will expand the coverage of program evaluation to practically all programs in the federal government (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009). To some extent, this could be interpreted as an opportunity to expand our profession. Unfortunately, the pool of experienced evaluators cannot be changed as quickly as the policy. As a result of the high demand for evaluation studies, the workload of evaluators will probably increase dramatically in the next coming years. The lack of resources (human and otherwise) to conduct these evaluations could lead to a number of unintended negative outcomes. For example, if evaluation cannot meet expectations in terms of quality due to lack of resources, there is a risk of losing credibility as a profession. Poor evaluations could convince policy and program representatives to turn to auditors to assess their programs. To some extent, this was already a problem before the policy was launched. The size of the new evaluation playing field will only increase the gap between demand and the supply of experienced evaluators. In our view, even if substantive financial resources were secured to fund evaluation projects, the lack of senior evaluators would remain a major barrier, as it takes years of practice to develop an evaluator capable of managing projects. The lack of senior resources could also lead to substandard practices, such as an abusive use of cookie-cutter approaches that prevent us from producing useful evaluations. Worse yet, it may leave the floor open to non-evaluators who would promote the use of approaches that are ill-adapted to evaluation. A human resource shortage could also cause serious strain on senior evaluators, convincing many to leave the profession prematurely.

Rescuing Evaluation from Expenditure Management

John Mayne

Advisor on Public Sector Performance, Ottawa

Over the years, there have been many expectations set out for evaluation in government. Many of these have probably been political, in the sense that they sounded good and gave evaluation a prominent

place in public management but were somewhat unrealistic. Evaluation utilization is a subject that has received and continues to receive considerable attention in the literature, with lots of varied advice on how utilization of different sorts can be improved. A key lesson from this literature and from the 30 or so years of having evaluation part of the public management scene—as is the case with the federal government—is probably the need to be modest about how and when evaluations can get used, hence the need to be modest about the potential the impact of evaluation. I will deal with the situation in the federal government.

A strength: There is a solid basis to build on. We have had 30 or more years of evaluation at the federal level with a strong emphasis on evaluation done to improve the performance of programs. Further, there is now a growing basis of experience over the past 6 years in supporting and furthering results-based management. The opportunity for evaluation to play a role in this that I raised in 2004 *Lay of the Land* article has in part been met.

A weakness: Good quality evaluation at the federal level seems to have become identified with evaluations that address the full range of evaluation issues (relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness). This usually gives rise to evaluations that address a large number of questions, but, to be manageable, each only in a limited way. It is widely accepted elsewhere that good evaluation practice is to focus evaluations on key issues of the day, and to not try to address too many. Federal evaluations, I would argue, frequently suffer in terms of quality and insight from trying to cover too much ground. This will be exacerbated under the new Treasury Board 2009 policy calling for 100% coverage of programs over a 5-year period (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009). One hundred percent coverage of programs with 100% coverage of issues is a recipe for mediocre evaluations and disappointment in what evaluation can contribute to better public administration.

A threat: Trying to link evaluation with resourcing. In my view, current federal efforts to link evaluation closely with resource allocation, especially central expenditure management, will not be productive and may undermine the more important purpose of helping to improve programs.

The idea to link evaluation and resource allocation is seemingly simple and one that has been around as long as has evaluation: evalua-

tion should be able to tell the worth of programs—that is, if programs are working or not—and hence should be of significant use to budget analysts and Ministers in determining resource allocations. That this had not been the case in the past seems to be conveniently forgotten; the belief still seems to be that we just need better evaluations and better processes for linking evaluation into expenditure management. Indeed, evaluations may contribute to resourcing discussions, but to the extent evaluation is seen as mainly serving resource allocation and especially central resource allocation, it will lose credibility where it counts: in departments, with senior and middle managers.

Believing that evaluation can play a significant role in resourcing allocation decisions is misguided, based on a naive vision of evaluation pronouncing yes or no on a program. Evaluation is, and should be, much more nuanced than that, pointing to both strengths and weaknesses in programs. There is little evidence that those envisaged as using evaluations in resource allocation have the needed capacity to do so in a meaningful and useful way, with an understanding of what evaluation can and cannot deliver.

An opportunity: To play a key role in moving toward a culture of results. The focus on results in public management is likely to continue both in Canada and elsewhere, and federal evaluation is well placed to play an essential role in fostering and being part of results management. In particular, there is a need in public organizations to foster and to build a culture of results—an evaluative culture—if results management is going to make significant impacts beyond reporting. Evaluation and evaluators can and should be playing a major role in departments in fostering such a culture. Linking evaluation closely to expenditure management will detract from this opportunity.

What's Ahead for Evaluation in the Federal Public Sector?

Robert Lahey
Consultant, Ottawa

To assess the current situation regarding evaluation in the federal public sector in Canada, it is useful to first look back at the intervening years since the 2003 review, and explore what has happened to the environment for evaluation in the interim. In brief, it has been a period of missed opportunities. Historically, evaluation has tended to prosper when the public (politicians and the media) has demanded more transparency and accountability in government. This is usually triggered by some form of political incident. The past few years wit-

nessed a very public airing of the “Sponsorship Scandal,” the Gomery Inquiry, and issues of spending by the Privacy Commissioner. All highlighted the very issues that the tools of accountability and good governance would typically address. In other words, a great case was being made for the use of evaluation (as well as internal audit) in government.

These events played out very well for internal audit: a new internal audit policy was put in place in 2006 which put new demands on Deputy Heads and was accompanied by a large infusion of new money to support the function. It did not go so well for evaluation. The evaluation function did not receive the same level of recognition or support that internal audit did. Attempts to introduce a new evaluation policy were thwarted and dragged on for years. No new money was infused into the system to support evaluation. And the word *evaluation* seemed to be disappearing from the radar screen, at least in a relative sense, in comparison to the exposure and profile given to internal audit: for example, *evaluation* does not appear in the text of the *Federal Accountability Act*. A revision to the government’s Policy on Transfer Payments, a key driver for evaluation over the early 2000s, has seen the evaluation component significantly watered down.

A strength: A major strength of evaluation at the federal level is the infrastructure that surrounds and defines the function. Taken in its broadest sense, it includes a policy on evaluation that sets the role, responsibilities, and expectations across government; the existence of a policy centre, the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation (CEE), that plays a variety of roles in support of the function and its use in government; and the internal network of evaluators that would include both the Heads of Evaluation of federal agencies that meet on a regular basis and a link to the community through the CES. By comparison, some other countries that have removed such elements as the policy centre have seen their evaluation function greatly weakened.

A weakness: The lack of a senior-level champion has been critical to how evaluation is viewed and to the lack of support (financial and otherwise) given it at the most senior levels. The dwindling presence of evaluation over the last 6 years—and, more recently, the lack of funding given to the function to support implementation of the new policy—is a demonstration of this weak point in the system for evaluation. The re-emergence of internal audit over the same period was brought about in part by the re-establishment and high profile of the Office of the Comptroller General.

Looking ahead, in terms of potential threats and opportunities, the new evaluation policy and the uncertainties surrounding its implementation represent a double-edged sword for the function. Let's examine why.

A threat: There are some potential threats with the new evaluation policy, though time will tell the extent to which these materialize in practice. First, there could be a repositioning of the prime driver for evaluation away from departments and toward the central agency. If, as some suggest, the pendulum is swinging so as to feed central agency needs, the use of evaluation in departments to better manage programs and policies could become of secondary importance, thus decreasing the overall value in evaluation. A second element of the new policy—demanding full coverage of all programs and all evaluation issues over a 5-year cycle, with no new investment into the system—imposes many challenges in a number of departments to actually make it work. With too few trained and experienced evaluators across the system, one wonders whether evaluation in departments will prosper or struggle. In the worst case scenario, this may eventually threaten how evaluation is viewed by senior government officials. Coupled with the two items above, Deputy Heads may not respond well to a 5-year cycle, particularly if there is a belief that the prime purpose is to feed the beast. This was the reaction in the mid 1980s, the last time a 5-year cycle was part of the policy requirements.

An opportunity: The new evaluation policy offers opportunities for the function. First, it creates an opportunity (for some short period of time) to raise the profile of evaluation and have a dialogue with senior and elected officials on the use of evaluation in government. Second, the policy does put some focus on the key issue of human resource development and the need to ensure that Heads of Evaluation have some level of the competencies needed for their important role. Follow-through on this by the CEE could have significant long-term benefits for community development. Finally, the new policy speaks to the conduct of cross-government evaluation, something that could potentially better link evaluation to policy making in government. Unfortunately, though, there are no new funds to support this latter item.

Three key players can play important roles in supporting the federal evaluation function: the CEE, as the champion and advocate; the Office of the Auditor General, providing independent oversight; and the Canadian Evaluation Society, advocating for federal evaluation and partnering in community development.

From Institutionalization to Dilution

Benoît Gauthier

Consultant, Gatineau, Quebec

Surely my views on the state of evaluation are tainted by my experience and by my professional location. I have been involved in evaluation for some 25 years; therefore, I tend to compare where we are to where we were. A large portion of my evaluation work was carried out in the federal arena; thus, this environment certainly colours my perspective on current challenges.

A strength: Since 2003, when we last took stock of the lay of the evaluation land, the discipline of evaluation has acquired very important professional tools. Today's evaluation world is made stronger by the existence of several graduate training programs that pay particular attention to evaluation. I'm thinking of the graduate programs at the University of Ottawa, Carleton University, the University of Victoria, Université du Québec à Montréal, and École nationale d'administration publique—and others I don't know about. Some CES chapters are very active at offering professional development events. The gigantic efforts expanded by the CES professional designation committee have led to the establishment of the first professional title in evaluation in Canada. All of this professional tooling means that evaluation is becoming a mainstream activity, one that has named itself and that has self-defined.

A weakness: Evaluation is not without weaknesses. One that I perceive to be on the rise lately is that of a feeble position when interacting with program management. Evaluation still often resorts to inconclusive methodologies that are easily questioned by stakeholders and management when the findings do not suit them. Too often, the evaluation function does not have the level of independence required to tell the tough stories the way they really are. It does not help that, as a group, evaluators are not very good at promoting their trade and their value added. We have not seen much advocacy effort supporting the evaluator's critical viewpoint since D'Aloisio and his colleagues (2007) presented the idea of an Evaluator General of Canada.

An opportunity: The current economic situation is conducive to fiscal restraint and to making hard decisions on public investments. It is also a formidable opportunity for evaluators to show what contribution they can make. Yes, we evaluate individual programs, determine whether they achieve their objectives, and identify ways they could

work better. At some point, the accumulation of knowledge about what works and what does not work should lead to an ability to provide guidance for policy and program development. This is where internal evaluation units should shine: they should be the corporate memory about program performance, and their expertise should be used to make the best decisions in a critical moment like now.

A threat: Conducting a useful, rigorous, independent, and credible evaluation demands time, resources, skill, and the cooperation of the organization. I am very concerned that the new Government of Canada Evaluation Policy (Treasury Board of Canada, 2009) states that “deputy heads will ensure that approved departmental evaluation plans demonstrate progress towards achieving coverage of all departmental direct program spending (excluding ongoing programs of grants and contributions) over five years.” Of course, the policy also states that “departmental evaluation plans that do not demonstrate evaluation coverage [must] use a risk-based approach to planning coverage of direct program spending.” A key threat is that federal evaluation units may be tempted to dilute evaluation efforts and resources over too many evaluation studies. This would undoubtedly push federal evaluators toward weak methodologies and would compromise efforts to build useful and actionable intelligence.

Gestion gagnante de la fonction d'évaluation

Alice Dignard

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Ce texte adopte l'angle du gestionnaire d'une unité administrative responsable de l'évaluation des programmes dans les organisations publiques. Cet acteur, responsable du déploiement de la fonction d'évaluation, est souvent oublié. Toutefois, son rôle est essentiel dans l'essor et le maintien de cette fonction; ses responsabilités sont souvent sous-estimées.

Périodiquement, il devra rendre compte du mécanisme permettant d'identifier et de planifier les programmes à évaluer, de l'avancement de ses projets, de sa production de rapports d'évaluation en nombre, qualité, et utilité, de l'adoption de plans de mise en œuvre des recommandations, de la satisfaction des gestionnaires concernés par les résultats, des mécanismes de suivi des recommandations et des plans, ainsi que de la gestion de son personnel incluant le perfectionnement des évaluateurs de son équipe. La recherche de ce gestionnaire hors pair d'une équipe d'évaluateurs pour assurer la pertinence, l'effica-

cité, l'efficacité de son mandat et obtenir des retombées utiles à son organisation est impérative.

Une force : une expérience collective de plus de deux décennies. Au fil des années, les gestionnaires de l'évaluation au gouvernement du Québec ont développé des façons de faire qui peuvent être considérées comme des conditions gagnantes. La fonction d'évaluation se structure et les responsables partagent une base commune capable de s'ajuster au contexte particulier de chaque organisation.

Des gestes concrets ont permis à plusieurs organisations gouvernementales de développer une capacité d'évaluation reconnue. Il s'agit :

- de l'adoption d'un cadre de référence en évaluation de programme où l'organisation précise ses principes directeurs;
- de la production d'une planification des projets d'évaluation à réaliser qui conduit à l'adoption par les autorités du plan d'évaluation annuel ou pluriannuel;
- de l'élaboration d'une démarche d'évaluation connue de tous;
- d'une réflexion sur le profil de compétences conduisant à une description d'emploi spécifique pour un spécialiste en évaluation de programme et dont les tâches sont totalement dédiées à l'évaluation;
- de la mise en place d'une équipe d'évaluateurs polyvalents;
- de la mise en place des mécanismes de suivi des projets et des résultats des évaluations;
- de la diffusion des résultats des évaluations.

Une faiblesse : le manque de développement collectif des gestionnaires dont la responsabilité est de réaliser la fonction d'évaluation au sein de leur organisation. En plus de maîtriser le domaine de l'évaluation pour être capable d'accompagner l'évaluateur dans la réalisation de ses projets, ces personnes en situation de gestion doivent être en mesure de planifier, d'organiser, de contrôler, de faire le suivi et d'évaluer leurs activités. Elles doivent également posséder des connaissances liées à la mission de leur organisation.

La pertinence, l'efficacité, l'efficacité, et la mesure des retombées sont des critères d'évaluation qui s'appliquent aux programmes évalués. Toutefois, ces mêmes critères doivent être rencontrés dans la gestion d'une unité administrative dont le mandat est l'évaluation des programmes et des interventions d'une organisation. Il serait prétentieux de faire des recommandations sur la base de ces critères sans en tenir compte pour ses propres produits et services.

Une menace : la pensée magique que le succès de l'évaluation repose uniquement sur les compétences et habiletés de l'équipe d'évaluateurs. La place de l'évaluation dans l'organisation, sa légitimité, ainsi que les conditions qui permettent d'assurer l'indépendance des évaluateurs sont des aspects non négligeables. L'unité administrative devrait relever du sous-ministre et du dirigeant de l'organisation et être positionnée dans la structure organisationnelle de manière à être à l'extérieur des unités qui administrent les programmes.

Dans un environnement favorable, l'équipe d'évaluateurs cherchera à devenir meilleure puisque chaque évaluation est une occasion d'apprendre, d'utiliser de nouvelles approches, et d'expérimenter de nouveaux outils. C'est donc au fil des expériences d'évaluation que se développera une réelle culture d'évaluation spécifique au contexte de l'organisation et à ses domaines d'affaires.

Une opportunité : un savoir à mettre en commun, un savoir qui permet de mettre en place de solides fondations. Les organisations se modifient rapidement; certains experts en évaluation relèvent d'autres défis de gestion dans un champ d'expertise différent; la deuxième génération de responsables des équipes d'évaluateurs quitte pour une retraite bien méritée; une relève est à former. Il devient alors important de créer une mémoire collective issue des expériences acquises en matière de gestion de la fonction d'évaluation.

Dans la poursuite de cette vision, le Groupe des responsables en analyse et évaluation de programme (GRAEP) a produit, au début de l'année 2009, son premier Manuel du responsable en évaluation de programme. Ce manuel rassemble des informations utiles aux responsables des unités d'évaluation dans les ministères et les organismes publics du gouvernement du Québec. Il vise à outiller ces personnes pour une prise en charge efficace de la fonction. Il ne s'agit pas de normaliser les approches, mais de mettre en place les conditions gagnantes qui assurent la réalisation et l'évolution de la fonction d'évaluation de programme dans nos organisations publiques.

Teaching and Learning in Evaluation

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I will continue with the theme presented in the 2003 report—that of the role of teaching and learning in evaluation. I will focus on the teaching and learning pertaining to inservice or professional development, with particular emphasis on moving the education on evalua-

tion into the workplace. This is a very important time in evaluation with the new federal policy and the work of the Canadian Evaluation Society on credentialing and professional designations of evaluators. Context for my analysis is also set in my working for 10 years as an educator in a university where the focus was on what makes a professional school and a profession, and ensuring the education that was necessary was provided. The following is a look at ongoing education.

A strength: The strength we experience is the opportunity we have now. The interest in evaluation and the demand for education in evaluation has probably never been higher. Evidence of interest may be the attendance at the 2009 CES National Conference, the highest ever. A number of projects concerned with evaluation education are making very good efforts. New texts by Canadians and the consortium of university teaching program evaluation are examples. These initiatives can serve as the basis for the work that is necessary for advancing teaching and learning in evaluation.

A weakness: The weaknesses we must address as we advance our educational role are twofold. First, there is a need to agree on a body of knowledge; access to first principles is an essential characteristic of a profession. This access is a license earned through education and certification. In developing and delivering professional development, perhaps our biggest concern is agreement on what constitutes a good program, what is the right material to teach. Second, we must find ways to incorporate evaluation theory into professional development. A theoretical teaching of techniques does not advance evaluation as a profession. Shadish, Cook, and Leviton (1991, p. 31) note

Without its unique theories, program evaluation would be just a set of loosely conglomerated researchers with principal allegiances to diverse disciplines, seeking to apply social science methods to studying social programs. Program evaluation is more than this, more than applied methodology.

A threat: There are several important threats. Insofar as the demand will increase, there is a need to respond. Educators would say you can “make or buy” education. We can develop education, or we can just buy foreign packages. There are a number of benefits to buying, but surely there are a greater number of limitations to importing education from the United States or from Australia, as some jurisdictions in Canada do. Appropriateness for the Canadian public sector context is an essential consideration in that decision. Is there a need for a

Canadian institute for evaluation that has a focus on teaching and learning in the Canadian context?

An opportunity: The time is right to take charge of the direction of evaluation education—the content, the promotion, and the provision of educational opportunities. There must be a response to the new federal policy, and the work on professional designation surely should generate demand. There are excellent teaching materials and strategies in the many university courses that need to be made a part of the learning fabric of organizations. At the same time that the body of knowledge is developed and delivered, the culture of evaluation must be developed. As we increase capacity through teaching and learning, perhaps we have to conceptualize the need for more professional development as a knowledge transfer issue. Many other disciplines are focusing on knowledge transfer and putting emphasis on knowledge, synthesis, translation, and exchange.

The teaching and learning roles must be given a new emphasis as we proceed in our development as a profession. We have to agree on what is needed to be a profession and who will prepare and deliver the education necessary for appropriate professional development.

Conclusion

Table 1 summarizes the views presented in this article and contrast them with those highlighted in 2003 (and published in 2004).

This analysis has a number of important implications for the practice of evaluation in Canada today. In 2003, we had already emphasized the importance of *representation and advocacy*. We stated, “[F]aced with very real threats, the field of evaluation, through its professional association, must react by deploying considerable efforts in representation and advocacy, making the role of evaluation in support of organizational accountability, adaptation and learning more evident than ever.” Not much has happened since 2003 in the terms of advocacy. The relevant page of the CES website (<<http://evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?en:4:8>>) refers to two letters published in 2006 and notes the efforts of a group of evaluators in favour of an Evaluator General of Canada. We understand that the CES has limited resources and is mainly volunteer-based; still, it has not seized this role even though it is the only Canadian organization positioned to take it. Advocacy means talking about evaluation, its unique perspective, and its role in public (and private, and nonprofit)

Table 1
Synthesis of the Lay of the Evaluation Land in 2003 and in 2009

<i>2009</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>STRENGTHS</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively, through their professional society and thanks to countless volunteer hours, Canadian evaluators have acquired the first formal professional designation system in the world of evaluation (see <http://evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?en:5:6>). It is hoped and expected that this designation will provide a path to training and professional development and will help distinguish professional evaluators from less well equipped professionals. • Maturity is also evident in the infrastructure that already exists and is being built in the federal government, in the training offered to evaluators, in the contribution that evaluation has made to program renewal, and in the innovative positions that evaluation leaders defend. • Being more focused on results than before, managers and front-line personnel are more likely to recognize the value of evaluation and to insert evaluation practices in their habitual management processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluators possess skills that other professions do not offer; this positioning is becoming clearer and clearer. • Based on the CES Support of Advocacy and Professional Development, evaluators have a collective professional development plan that can assist them to self-define. • Today's evaluation practice emphasizes the involvement of program managers, the participation of stakeholders, and collaboration overall.
<i>WEAKNESSES</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As crucial as it is, the development of tools to train and support evaluators is far from sufficient, in particular in view of the lack of a commonly accepted core body of knowledge. There is a clear need for advanced education and professional development in evaluation, in particular in support of the analysis of complex issues of cost-effectiveness and rationale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notwithstanding the specific skills of its practitioners, program evaluation has not acquired an identity of its own, and it has found it difficult to demonstrate its value, particularly in the face of short-term performance monitoring.

2009

2003

WEAKNESSES (continued)

- Current professional limitations, limited resources, and lack of independence make it difficult to articulate convincing arguments addressing difficult questions.
- Maturity may have come at the price of rigidity in evaluation approaches: evaluation tends to be overly centred on performance measurement and on accountability, and to mechanically ask all possible evaluation questions at the detriment of targeting key issues, understanding program successes and failures, and contributing to program improvement.
- Evaluators have not been successful at applying their own medicine to themselves: we do not measure our performance and study how we affect our world (Auditor General of Canada, 2009, par. 1.44 and ff.).
- The lack of a clear champion for evaluation makes it difficult to inspire innovation and to gain recognition beyond the community of the important role that evaluation plays in all sectors.
- Program evaluation has been generally unable to absorb performance measurement requirements that have surfaced in the past 6 years.
- Faced with limited resources, managers have made choices between evaluation and performance measurement that could have been made moot if program evaluators had known to position their skills and knowledge strategically.
- Where evaluators have attempted to adapt, they have sometimes done so at the expense of their specificity by neglecting key evaluation issues and losing emphasis on rigour.
- Weak self-identity also negatively impacts the capacity of the university system to produce program evaluation specialists.

THREATS

- The demand for evaluation and evaluators appears on the rise (Auditor General of Canada, 2009, par. 1.16 and ff.), but the supply of evaluators and the financial resources to conduct evaluations are not (Auditor General of Canada, 2009, par. 1.49 and ff.).
- Independent contract work is decreasing in some jurisdictions, leading to a threat to the ability of evaluators to tell a clear and direct story.
- The environment of program evaluation practice today presents three key interrelated threats: the dominance of program monitoring at the cost of better understanding of why results are not observed; the lack of program evaluation self-identity

2009

2003

THREATS (continued)

- Available resources are too limited to implement truly compelling research designs to provide more definitive answers to difficult questions.
 - Various systemic demands for evaluative information are uncoordinated and lead to the thin dispersion of scarce resources.
 - The collective definition of the field of evaluation still lacks in clarity; the centrality of the notion of attribution is not clear to everyone.
 - There is no agreement on whether evaluation should focus on resource allocation questions or on program improvement issues.
 - Some advocate a centralization of evaluation efforts that could risk reducing the pertinence of evaluation for line organizations where evaluators can use their analytical skills to contribute to the decision-making process.
 - Notwithstanding successful efforts to move evaluation down the path of professionalization, there are still underqualified individuals who present themselves as evaluators.
- while other professionals encroached into the assessment territory; and insufficient connection with management needs.
- Overall, there is a real threat to the very existence of program evaluation: lack of demonstrated value, weak self-definition as a domain of inquiry, program monitoring seen as a substitute approach by many, and lack of strategic positioning in organizations could translate into diminishing desire to fund program evaluation.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Performance measurement has demonstrated its limitations. Many managers are turning to evaluation to really understand the logic of their action.
- On the federal scene, the evaluation policy increases the requirements for evaluation; if evaluators can deliver (given sufficient resources and the appropriate mix of expertise), they
- Results-based and outcome-based management are here to stay, at least for the next few years. Evaluators know that they can make a significant contribution to making this trend a reality on the ground.

2009

2003

OPPORTUNITIES (continued)

- could make a real difference, especially if evaluators adopt a more systemic view of program action so as to offer a global understanding of organizational effectiveness instead of a limited program-by-program perspective.
- The implementation of a Certified Evaluator designation by CES is a major opportunity to position evaluation as a more credible discipline than ever before.
 - Some global changes favour evaluation: for example, ever more rapid exchange of information could translate into more impactful studies.
 - The demographic profile of the profession is such that there will be significant turnover in the next few years; this is an opportunity to bring in new ideas and new approaches to evaluation.
 - We need to make that known, however, collectively through advocacy and partnership efforts and individually within our organizations by ensuring that we are ready for the challenge (getting the appropriate training, networking to learn about opportunities and difficulties, etc.).
 - Evaluators have the opportunity to reconnect with program managers by listening to their needs and identifying how our skills can be best put to use in that context.
 - But first, evaluators must clarify for themselves who they are; they must self-define so that they can communicate to others what their specific contribution is and what service they provide that no other professional offers.

sector management; it means raising the profile of evaluation when our trade could contribute; it means identifying successes and showing that evaluators can make a difference.

The importance of structured, formal *training and professional development* has never been clearer. Professionalization demands that new evaluators bring knowledge assets to the discipline and that existing evaluators continuously sharpen their skills and abilities. They cannot do it alone, though. Universities are on the front line of this battle, as are local chapters of the CES who are largely responsible for professional development opportunities.

If we are to learn about evaluation best practices so as to improve our batting average at successful evaluations, someone must take responsibility for collecting knowledge about evaluation activity. There is too little *research on evaluation* in Canada.

To maximize its contribution, evaluation must *move away from* what has become a *traditional mould*: plan evaluation studies around individual programs, include all possible evaluation questions, and unfold the study process over several months. This manner of evaluation might have been necessary while evaluation was establishing its position as the rigorous pursuit of knowledge about program impact, but it seriously lacks agility in an environment as unpredictable and unsympathetic as the one organizations now have to face (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Evaluators should experiment with focusing on issues that are key at a particular juncture; with implementing progressive evaluations (where approaches are staged from quick low investment to sustained long designs and terminated when sufficient information is gathered) (Winberg, 1991); and with leveraging methodologies that can address several programs sharing, for example, intended impacts, targets, or clientele. This is not to say that evaluators should involve themselves in quick-and-dirty studies; it is to say that we must learn to pace ourselves, to invest our resources smartly, and to keep the biggest methodological guns for instances where the shooting is likely to reach the target.

As stated in 2004, we must learn to *position ourselves* better in the formal and informal networks of organizations so that we can deliver our knowledge when it is most appropriate. This may not be at the next evaluation committee meeting; it could be next week while discussing a new government priority.

Finally, evaluators must *operate at the system level* in addition to the level of individual programs that they have traditionally addressed. This is where internal evaluation teams must shine. They must aggregate knowledge across the organization to draw lessons about what works and what does not work with their client base and their subject matter. This is a difficult task because we evaluators have been trained to address our methodologies to individual programs, but this is not where we will find our maximum value added. Many professionals in the organization can offer advice on individual program performance; few have a perspective wide enough to profess across the variety of approaches adopted by the organization.

Appendix — Annexe Summary — Sommaire

Cette annexe présente les grandes lignes des positions articulées par les contributeurs de cet article (Tableau 2).

Le tableau 3 synthétise les conclusions et les implications de nos observations pour la pratique de l'évaluation au Canada.

De cette analyse découle un certain nombre de conséquences importantes pour la pratique de l'évaluation au Canada aujourd'hui. En 2003, nous avons déjà souligné l'importance de la représentation et de la défense de la cause. Nous déclarions que, « face à des menaces très réelles, la discipline doit, par l'intermédiaire de son association professionnelle, réagir en déployant des efforts considérables en matière de représentation et de promotion afin de rendre plus évident que jamais le rôle de l'évaluation pour mieux appuyer la responsabilisation, l'adaptation et l'apprentissage organisationnels. » Il s'est passé peu de choses depuis 2003 sur le plan de la défense de la cause. La page correspondante du site Web de la SCÉ (voir <<http://evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?fr:4:8>>) réfère à deux lettres publiées en 2006 et note les efforts d'un groupe d'évaluateurs en faveur d'une fonction d'Évaluateur général du Canada. Nous comprenons que la SCÉ dispose de ressources limitées et est essentiellement fondée sur le volontariat; néanmoins, la Société n'a pas saisi ce rôle même si elle est le seul organisme canadien en position de le prendre. Défendre la cause signifie parler de l'évaluation, de sa perspective unique et de son rôle dans la gestion du secteur public (mais aussi des secteurs privé et sans but lucratif). Cela signifie mettre l'évaluation de l'avant lorsque notre métier peut offrir une plus-value. Cela signifie parler de nos succès et montrer que les évaluateurs peuvent faire une différence.

L'importance de la formation formelle et structurée ainsi que du perfectionnement n'a jamais été aussi claire. La professionnalisation exige que les nouveaux évaluateurs apportent un capital de connaissances à la discipline et que les évaluateurs existants affinent en permanence leurs compétences et leurs aptitudes. Ils ne peuvent pas le faire de façon isolée cependant. Les universités sont sur la ligne de front de cette bataille, tout comme les sections locales et régionales de la SCÉ qui sont largement responsables de l'organisation d'activités de perfectionnement.

Tableau 2
Synthèse des positions des auteurs

<i>Contributeur</i>	<i>Forces</i>	<i>Faiblesse</i>	<i>Menace</i>	<i>Opportunité</i>
Robert Malatest, consultant, Victoria	Amélioration de la planification de l'évaluation	Ressources trop limitées pour analyser les impacts nets	Réduction du travail contractuel en évaluation et réduction équivalente de l'indépendance des évaluations	Meilleure connaissance de l'évaluation chez les bailleurs de fonds
James C. McDavid, professeur, Victoria	Mise en œuvre du projet des titres professionnels de la Société canadienne d'évaluation	Manque de programmes d'éducation et de formation en évaluation	Lacunes dans la définition collective de la nature de l'évaluation (l'attribution est une partie essentielle du travail)	Remise en question de la mesure du rendement au profit d'approches évaluatives
Gail V. Barrington, consultante, Calgary	Reconnaissance de la valeur de l'évaluation par les gestionnaires et les premières lignes; insertion dans les processus habituels de gestion	Rigidité d'une démarche axée sur la mesure du rendement et la reddition de comptes	Présence de personnes sous-qualifiées se présentant comme évaluateurs	Mise en place d'un titre professionnel pour appuyer l'amélioration des pratiques et l'accroissement de la crédibilité des évaluateurs

<i>Contributeur</i>	<i>Forces</i>	<i>Faiblesse</i>	<i>Menace</i>	<i>Opportunité</i>
Greg Mason, consultant, Winnipeg	Maturité et assurance de l'évaluation comme discipline	Approche mécanique à la démarche évaluative découlant d'exigences fédérales	Résistance au changement empêchant de saisir les opportunités	Nouvelle politique fédérale d'évaluation portant sur tous les programmes de dépenses
Sandra L. Bozzo, fonctionnaire, Toronto	Accent placé sur les résultats par les gestionnaires publics	Engagement limité des partenaires dans la démarche évaluative	Ressources réduites limitant la capacité de mettre en œuvre des évaluations selon les normes de rigueur habituelles	Communication rapide d'information sur le rendement et sur la transparence
Nancy L. Porteous, fonctionnaire, Ottawa	Leadership de certains dans la promotion de la discipline	Peu d'auto-évaluation efficace de notre propre action	Manque de coordination entre les diverses demandes institutionnalisées pour l'information évaluative et dispersion des efforts	Demande croissante pour l'information évaluative au gouvernement fédéral (nouvelle politique d'évaluation et revues stratégiques)

<i>Contributeur</i>	<i>Forces</i>	<i>Faiblesse</i>	<i>Menace</i>	<i>Opportunité</i>
Simon Roy, consultant, Ottawa	Amélioration de la culture fédérale d'évaluation en dehors des groupes d'évaluation	Capacité professionnelle limitée, surtout en ce qui a trait aux analyses coût-efficacité et aux évaluations formatives	Demande excessive en regard de la disponibilité de ressources au niveau fédéral	Relève de la garde et remise en question des façons de faire établies
John Mayne, conseiller, Ottawa	Solide expérience en évaluation visant l'amélioration du rendement des programmes fédéraux	Tendance à poser mécaniquement et superficiellement toutes les questions évaluatives plutôt que de viser les enjeux prioritaires	Association de l'évaluation avec les décisions de financement alors qu'elle devrait informer sur les forces et les faiblesses des programmes	Contribuer au renforcement d'une culture axée sur les résultats des programmes et non sur leur existence ou leur abolition
Robert Lahey, fonctionnaire, Ottawa	Solide infrastructure fédérale incluant une politique, un centre fonctionnel et des réseaux actifs	Absence d'un champion au niveau supérieur pour l'évaluation au gouvernement fédéral	Marginalisation possible de l'évaluation par centralisation des préoccupations et perte de pertinence pour les ministères et agences	Visibilité accrue par une nouvelle politique

<i>Contributeur</i>	<i>Forces</i>	<i>Faiblesse</i>	<i>Menace</i>	<i>Opportunité</i>
Benoît Gauthier, consultant, Gatineau	Outilage professionnel accru : formation, perfectionnement, et titre professionnel	Difficulté à articuler des argumentaires convainquants pour des conclusions difficiles à cause des méthodes employées et du manque d'indépendance	Dilution de ressources évaluatives rares dans un trop grand nombre d'études superficielles	Devenir la mémoire corporative sur le rendement des programmes et politiques publiques et influencer les décisions stratégiques
Alice Dignard, gestionnaire publique, Québec	Une expérience collective de deux décennies en évaluation et des actions qui structurent et organisent cette fonction au sein de nos organisations publiques	Insuffisance de la formation à la gestion de la fonction d'évaluation	Sous-estimation des conditions essentielles : le positionnement de la fonction d'évaluation dans l'organisation, sa légitimité, et son indépendance	Mise en commun du savoir et formalisation des processus internes d'évaluation pour faire face au renouvellement du personnel et pour accueillir la relève en gestion
Kaireen Chaytor, consultante, Halifax	Demande accrue pour la formation académique en évaluation	Manque d'accord sur ce qui constitue les connaissances de base en évaluation	Adoption de modèles étrangers de formation en évaluation, probablement mal adaptés à la réalité canadienne	Prendre en charge l'éducation des évaluateurs en ces temps de professionnalisation

Table 3
Synthèse des observations de 2003 et de 2009

2009	2003
<p>FORCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectivement, grâce à leur association professionnelle et à d'innombrables heures de bénévolat, les évaluateurs canadiens ont acquis le premier système formel de titre professionnel dans le monde de l'évaluation (voir <http://evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?fr:5:6>). On s'attend à ce que ce titre offre un cheminement de formation et de perfectionnement et à ce qu'il aide à distinguer les évaluateurs professionnels des analystes moins bien équipés. • La maturité de la discipline est également évidente dans l'infrastructure en place et en construction au sein du gouvernement fédéral, dans la formation offerte aux évaluateurs, dans la contribution que l'évaluation a eu dans le renouvellement des programmes, et dans les positions novatrices défendues par les chefs de file en évaluation. • Plus axés sur les résultats que par le passé, les gestionnaires et le personnel de première ligne sont plus nombreux à reconnaître la valeur de l'évaluation et à insérer les pratiques d'évaluation dans leurs processus habituels de gestion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Les évaluateurs possèdent des compétences que d'autres professions n'offrent pas; ce positionnement est de plus en plus clair. • Sur la base du document de la SCE intitulé <i>Projet de la Société canadienne d'évaluation visant à appuyer la défense des intérêts et la perfectionnement professionnel</i>, les évaluateurs ont un projet collectif de perfectionnement qui peut les aider à s'auto-définir. • La pratique contemporaine de l'évaluation met l'accent sur l'implication des gestionnaires de programme, la participation des intervenants, et la collaboration.
<p>FAIBLESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crucial, le développement d'outils de formation et d'appui aux évaluateurs est insuffisant, en particulier à la lumière de l'absence d'un bagage de connaissances minimale reconnu. Le besoin de formation avancée et de perfection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malgré les compétences spécifiques de ses praticiens, l'évaluation de programme n'a pas acquis une identité propre. Elle trouve difficile de démontrer sa valeur, en particu-

nement est évident, surtout pour appuyer l'analyse des enjeux complexes de coût-efficacité et de raison d'être.

- Les contraintes professionnelles actuelles, les ressources limitées, et le manque d'indépendance rendent difficile l'articulation d'arguments convaincants sur les questions délicates.
- La maturité est peut-être arrivée au prix de la rigidité dans les approches d'évaluation : les évaluations tendent à être exagérément centrées sur la mesure du rendement et sur l'imputabilité et à poser mécaniquement toutes les questions d'évaluation au détriment d'un ciblage sur les enjeux clés, de la compréhension des succès et des échecs des programmes, et de la contribution à l'amélioration des programmes.
- Les évaluateurs ne se sont pas appliqués leur propre médecine : nous ne mesurons pas notre rendement et n'étudions pas comment nous modifions notre environnement (Vérificateur général du Canada, 2009, par. 1.44 et ss.).
- En l'absence d'un champion de l'évaluation, il est difficile d'insuffler un mouvement novateur et d'être reconnu au-delà de la communauté des évaluateurs pour le rôle important que l'évaluation joue dans tous les secteurs.

MENACES

- La demande pour l'évaluation et les évaluateurs semble en hausse (Vérificateur général du Canada, 2009, par. 1.16 et ss.) mais la disponibilité d'évaluateurs et de ressources financières ne le sont pas (Vérificateur général du Canada, 2009, par. 1.49 et ss.).
- L'environnement de la pratique contemporaine de l'évaluation comporte trois menaces interreliées : la domination du suivi de programme au prix d'une bonne compréhension des raisons de non-atteinte

lier face au suivi à court terme du rendement.

- L'évaluation de programme a généralement été incapable d'absorber les exigences de mesure du rendement qui sont apparues au cours des six dernières années.
- Face aux ressources limitées, les gestionnaires ont fait des choix entre l'évaluation et la mesure de rendement qu'ils auraient pu éviter si les évaluateurs avaient su positionner leurs compétences et leurs connaissances plus stratégiquement.
- Lorsque les évaluateurs ont tenté de s'adapter, ils l'ont parfois fait au prix de leur spécificité en négligeant des questions d'évaluation importantes et en perdant en rigueur.
- Une faible identité disciplinaire réduit aussi la capacité du système universitaire de produire des spécialistes de l'évaluation de programme.

2009

- Le travail contractuel indépendant perd du terrain dans certaines juridictions, ce qui se traduit par une menace à la capacité des évaluateurs de présenter des conclusions claires et directes.
- Les ressources disponibles sont trop limitées pour mettre en œuvre des plans de recherche vraiment convaincants donnant des réponses plus définitives à des questions difficiles.
- L'absence de coordination des exigences systémiques en matière d'évaluation conduit à l'essaimage de ressources rares.
- La définition collective du domaine de l'évaluation manque encore de clarté; la centralité de la notion d'attribution n'est pas établie pour tout le monde.
- Il n'y a pas d'accord à savoir si l'évaluation devrait se concentrer sur les questions d'allocation des ressources ou sur les questions d'amélioration des programmes.
- Certains plaident en faveur d'une centralisation des efforts d'évaluation qui risquerait de réduire la pertinence de l'évaluation pour la première ligne où les évaluateurs peuvent utiliser leurs compétences analytiques et contribuer au processus de décision.
- Malgré le succès des efforts de professionnalisation de l'évaluation, il y a encore des individus sous-qualifiés qui se présentent comme des évaluateurs.

2003

- des objectifs, l'absence d'une identité autonome des évaluateurs alors que d'autres spécialités envahissent le territoire de l'évaluation, et un contact insuffisant avec les besoins de la gestion.
- Dans l'ensemble, il existe de réelles menaces à l'existence de l'évaluation : manque de démonstration de valeur ajoutée, faible auto-identification comme domaine de recherche, suivi de programme considéré par plusieurs comme substitut acceptable, et manque de positionnement stratégique dans les organisations pourraient se traduire par un financement chancelant de l'évaluation de programme.

OPPORTUNITÉS

- La mesure du rendement a montré ses limites. Beaucoup de gestionnaires se tournent vers l'évaluation pour comprendre réellement la logique de leur action.
- Sur la scène fédérale, la politique d'évaluation accroît les exigences placées sur l'évaluation; si les évaluateurs livrent la marchandise (avec des ressources suffisantes et le dosage approprié de compétences), ils pourraient faire une réelle différence, surtout s'ils adoptent une vision plus systémique de l'action des programmes afin d'offrir une compréhension globale de l'efficacité organisationnelle au lieu d'une perspective programme par programme.
- L'implantation d'un titre d'évaluateur accrédité par la SCÉ est une occasion importante de positionner l'évaluation comme une discipline plus crédible que jamais.
- Certains changements globaux favorisent l'évaluation : par exemple, l'échange de plus en plus rapide d'information pourrait se traduire par des études plus percutantes.
- Le profil démographique de la profession est tel qu'il y aura un roulement important au cours des années à venir; c'est une occasion de renouveler les approches à l'évaluation.

- La gestion axée sur les résultats est là pour rester, au moins pour les années à venir. Les évaluateurs savent qu'ils peuvent apporter une contribution significative à faire de cette tendance une réalité sur le terrain.
- Nous devons le faire savoir cependant, à la fois collectivement par les efforts de défense de la cause et individuellement au sein de nos organisations en veillant à être prêts à relever le défi (obtenir la formation appropriée, se mettre en réseau pour connaître les possibilités et les difficultés, etc.).
- Les évaluateurs ont l'occasion de renouer avec les gestionnaires de programme en étant à l'écoute de leurs besoins et en identifiant la façon dont nos compétences peuvent être mieux mises à profit dans ce contexte.
- Mais les évaluateurs doivent d'abord préciser pour eux-mêmes qui ils sont; ils doivent s'auto-définir pour mieux expliquer leur contribution spécifique et les services qu'ils sont les seuls à fournir.

Pour en apprendre davantage sur les meilleures pratiques en évaluation, de façon à améliorer notre moyenne au bâton d'évaluations réussies, quelqu'un doit prendre la responsabilité de réunir les connaissances sur l'activité d'évaluation. Il y a trop peu de recherches sur l'évaluation au Canada.

Pour maximiser sa contribution, l'évaluation doit s'éloigner de ce qui est devenu un moule traditionnel : planifier des études d'évaluation autour de programmes individuels, inclure toutes les questions d'évaluation possibles et mettre en œuvre une étude d'évaluation sur plusieurs mois. Cette approche à l'évaluation était peut-être nécessaire lorsque l'évaluation en était à raffermir sa position comme démarche de quête rigoureuse de connaissances sur l'impact des programmes; mais elle manque péniblement d'agilité dans un environnement aussi imprévisible et peu sympathique que celui auxquels les organisations doivent maintenant faire face (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Les évaluateurs devraient tenter des expériences en mettant l'accent sur les questions qui sont essentielles à un moment particulier, en mettant en œuvre des évaluations de façon progressive (utilisant d'abord des approches exigeant un faible investissement et produisant des résultats rapidement, passant ensuite, au besoin, à des approches basées sur des plans de recherche à long terme, l'une et l'autre étant stoppées lorsque suffisamment d'informations ont été amassées; Winberg, 1991), en utilisant des méthodologies qui peuvent viser plusieurs programmes partageant des résultats attendus, des cibles, des clientèles, et ainsi de suite. Cela ne signifie pas que les évaluateurs devraient s'impliquer dans des études à rabais; cela signifie que nous devons apprendre à ajuster le rythme, à investir nos ressources rares intelligemment et à réserver nos gros boulets méthodologiques pour les cas où l'artillerie est le plus susceptible d'atteindre la cible.

Comme nous l'avons déclaré en 2004, nous devons apprendre à mieux nous positionner dans les réseaux formels et informels des organisations de sorte à livrer nos connaissances au moment approprié. Ce n'est peut-être pas à la prochaine réunion du comité d'évaluation; ce peut être la semaine prochaine tout en discutant d'une nouvelle priorité du gouvernement.

Enfin, les évaluateurs doivent apprendre à fonctionner au niveau du système dans son ensemble, en plus du niveau que représentent les programmes individuels comme nous avons appris à le faire traditionnellement. C'est là que les équipes internes d'évaluation

doivent briller. Elles doivent agréger le savoir dans l'organisation et tirer des leçons sur ce qui fonctionne et ce qui ne fonctionne pas, selon les clientèles et les objets. C'est une tâche difficile parce que nous, évaluateurs, avons été formés à appliquer nos méthodologies aux programmes individuels, mais ce n'est pas à ce niveau que nous dégagerons notre valeur ajoutée maximale. De nombreux professionnels dans l'organisation peuvent offrir des conseils sur le rendement des programmes; par contre, peu ont une perspective suffisamment large pour professer en tenant compte de tout l'éventail des approches adoptées dans une organisation.

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Benoît Gauthier is a consultant who has been active in program evaluation for 25 years, first as a federal public servant, then as a private practitioner. He has had the privilege of leading a scanning exercise like this one in 2003, and to be a member of a volunteer research team that produced a profile of evaluation practice in Canada in 2005 and a description of new evaluators in 2008. He has received the CES awards for Contribution to Evaluation in Canada and for Service to the Canadian Evaluation Society, and the CESEF award for Contribution to Research on Evaluation Practice.

Robert Lahey has over 30 years experience in evaluation, leading evaluation units in 5 federal departments. He was the founding head of Treasury Board's Centre of Excellence for Evaluation. Since leaving government 6 years ago, he has advised Canadian and international organizations on developing and implementing results-based M&E capacity. In 2004, the CES presented Bob with its Award for Contribution to Evaluation in Canada.

Robert Malatest is the President of R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd., a national firm specializing in program evaluation, performance measurement, and outcomes research. Mr. Malatest has witnessed the evolution of evaluation in three major provinces in Canada—British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario—from the perspective of an evaluation service provider. Mr. Malatest has a BA and MA in Economics

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Greg Mason, Managing Partner of PRA Inc., is a certified management consultant and economist specializing in applied policy analysis, forecasting, consumer demand analysis, survey research, and program evaluation. He has designed and executed many surveys, and he teaches econometrics, cost-benefit analysis, program evaluation, and survey research methodology to professionals and university students.

Dr. John Mayne is an independent advisor on public sector performance. He has been working with a number of government and international organizations and jurisdictions. He has authored numerous articles and reports, and edited 5 books in the areas of program evaluation, public administration, and performance monitoring. In 1989 and in 1995, he was awarded the Canadian Evaluation Society Award for Contribution to Evaluation in Canada. In 2006, he was made a Canadian Evaluation Society Fellow.

James C. McDavid is a professor of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and co-director of the Local Government Institute. He specializes in program evaluation, performance measurement, performance management, and the production of local government services. Currently, he is heading up the Secretariat for the Consortium of Universities for Evaluation Education (CUEE) in Canada.

Nancy L. Porteous has almost 20 years of experience in planning, performance measurement, and evaluation. Currently Director of Evaluation at the Public Health Agency of Canada, she has also worked in local government and as a consultant. She is currently chair of the Canadian Evaluation Society Educational Fund and was president of the CES in 2000–2002. Nancy received the CES Award for Contribution to Evaluation in Canada in 1998.

Simon Roy is a Partner at Goss Gilroy Inc. He began his consulting career in 1995 and has been conducting program evaluations since that date. Simon has conducted work for public, private, and nonprofit organizations, but mostly for federal departments including HRSDC, Indian and Northern Affairs, Industry Canada, Canadian Heritage, and many others. He has a master's degree in industrial relations and a PhD in sociology.