

# ***Beyond Use: A Theory of Evaluation Influence***

*presented by*  
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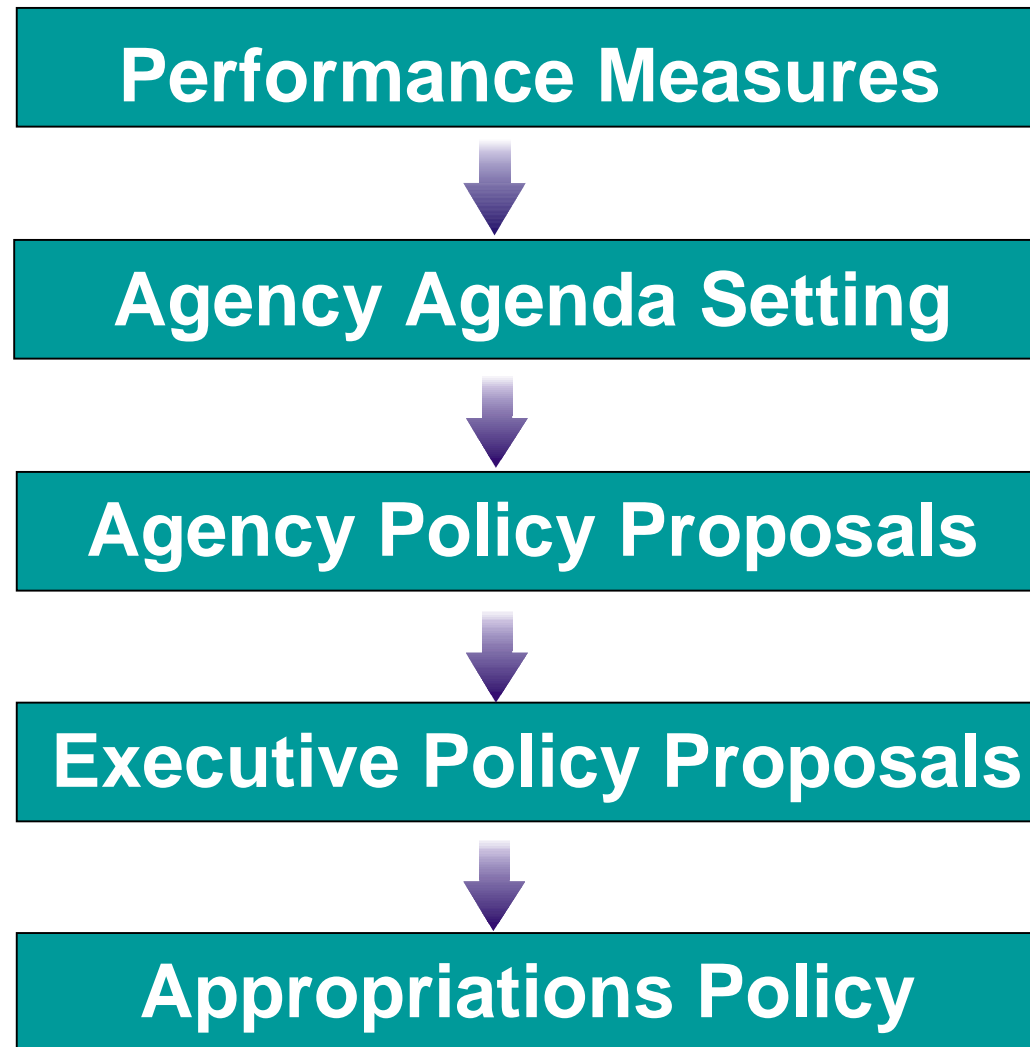
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# Influence of Evaluation Findings: An Example

Use of performance measurement in states in U.S.  
*(Melkers and Willoughby 2002)*

- Legislative Branch Final Appropriation Decisions  
Not important to somewhat important (1.58)
- Executive Budget Decisions  
Somewhat important (1.96)
- Agency Budget Development  
Somewhat important to important (2.54)

# Influence of Evaluation Findings



# Levels of Evaluation Influence

**Individual**

**Interpersonal**

**Collective Action  
(Public and  
Private  
Organizations)**

**Table 1: Targets for evaluation influence at the individual level**

Individual Attitudes and Behaviors	Example
<p><b>Attitude Change</b>  <i>Greenberg, Mandell, &amp; Onstott (2000)</i></p>	<p>Evaluation findings change state policymakers' opinions about feasibility of implementing program</p>
<p><b>Salience</b>  <i>Henry &amp; Gordon (2001)</i></p>	<p>Information about program effects raise the importance of the issue or social problem</p>
<p><b>Elaboration</b>  <i>Petty &amp; Cacioppo (1986)</i></p>	<p>Evaluation report stimulates individuals to think more about the program and their expectations for its Outcomes</p>
<p><b>Priming</b>  <i>Krosnick &amp; Brannon (1993)</i></p>	<p>Discussion of test scores at beginning of evaluation report makes test scores more important in reader's judgment about program effectiveness</p>
<p><b>Skill Acquisition</b>  <i>King (2002)</i></p>	<p>New skills, such as collaboration or survey techniques, are learned through participation in evaluation</p>
<p><b>Behavior Change</b>  <i>Patton (1997)</i></p>	<p>Teachers begin to mix whole language and phonics instruction after learning that combining the approaches is more effective than either one separately</p>

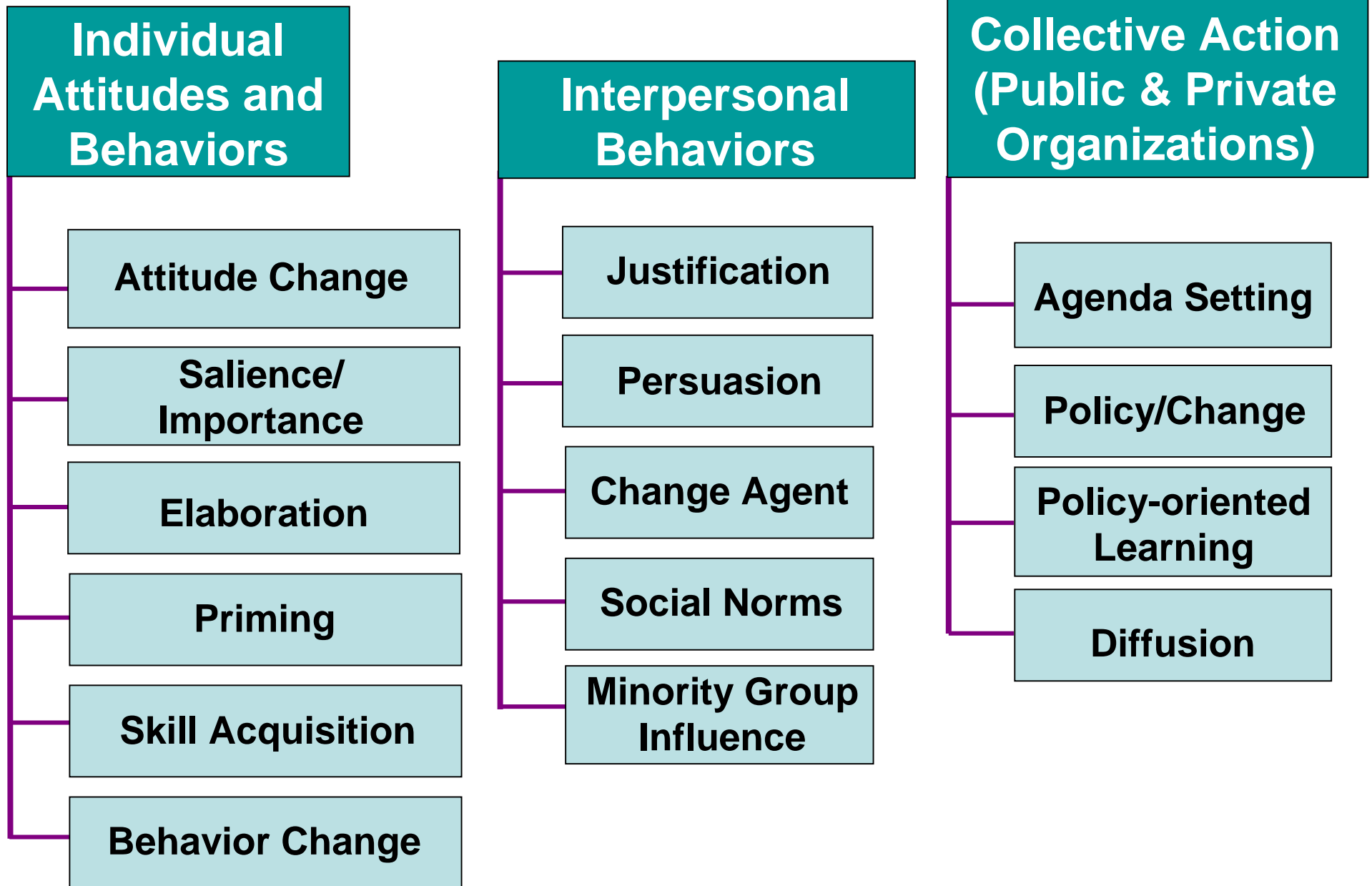
**Table 2: Targets for evaluation influence at the interpersonal level**

Interpersonal	Example
<p><b>Persuasion</b>  <i>Greenberg, Mandell, &amp; Onstott (2000)</i></p>	<p>Communication of results through credible organization persuades policymakers that program should be supported</p>
<p><b>Justification</b>  <i>Shulock (1999)</i></p>	<p>Results showing quality childcare enhances children's development are used to justify higher quality standards for childcare licenses</p>
<p><b>Change Agent</b>  <i>Weick &amp; Quinn (1999)</i></p>	<p>Results influence an individual to work for organizational change</p>
<p><b>Minority Group Influence</b>  <i>Glazer (1994)</i></p>	<p>Opinion minorities use findings to counter widely held attitudes</p>
<p><b>Social Norms</b>  <i>Henry &amp; Gordon (2003); Ajzen and Fishbein (1980)</i></p>	<p>Evaluation changes social norms about telecommuting and new norms increase telecommuting and reduce driving</p>

**Table 3: Targets for evaluation influence on collective actions**

<b>Collective Action (Public or Private Organizations)</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Agenda Setting</b> <i>Henry (2002); McCombs &amp; Zhu (1995)</i>	Media reports of evaluation findings increase public opinion about the importance of providing preschool
<b>Policy-oriented Learning</b> <i>Sabatier &amp; Jenkins-Smith (1993)</i>	Advocacy coalition modifies policy recommendation based on evidence of success of several program alternatives
<b>Policy Change</b> <i>Mintrom (1997)</i>	Evidence of growing social problem influences the adoption of a major policy reform
<b>Diffusion</b> <i>Berry &amp; Berry (1990)</i>	Evidence of a policy's success in another jurisdiction influences the adoption of similar policy elsewhere

# Levels and Mechanisms of Evaluation Influence



***Example of influence pathway triggered by evaluation process***



# A theory of evaluation influence: Conclusions

## ➤ Regarding “theory”

- ✦ Theory of influence parallels program theory (of change).
- ✦ Influence and evaluation outcomes replace the construct “use”.
- ✦ Fine grained models of influence mechanisms and pathways with evaluation findings and processes as the triggers.
- ✦ Realist approach, emphasizing underlying mechanisms through which evaluation affects attitudes and behavior.

## ➤ Regarding “learning”

- ✦ Specifies learning as key outcome of evaluation.
- ✦ Individual, interpersonal, and organizational learning.

## ➤ Regarding “evidence”

- ✦ The mechanisms we identify have empirical support.
- ✦ We argue for more and better evidence *about* use or influence.
- ✦ Evidence is the missing link for “evidence-based practice”