

# Building Capacity to Analyze, Evaluate, and Measure Government Performance

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NSF Advisory Committee  
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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
THE TRACHTENBERG SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

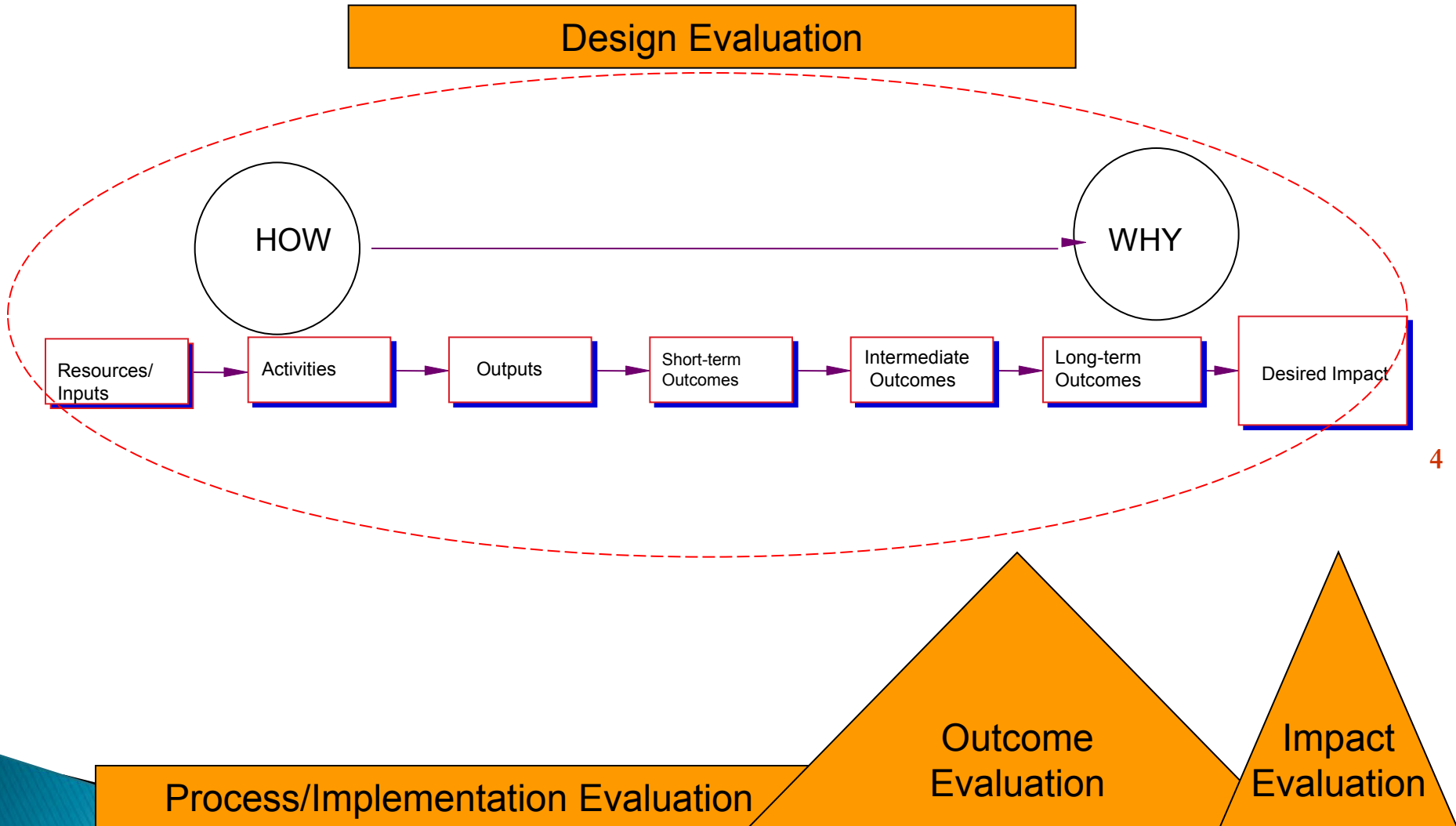
# My Key Points

1. Program evaluation, which includes ongoing performance measurement, should be planned and executed strategically and in a coordinated fashion within an organization.
2. Identification of needed evaluation competencies should begin with a consideration of the desired outcomes, i.e., enhanced organizational learning and improved organizational performance.
3. Consistency in leadership support for capacity and political will to use measurement and evaluation within an organizational culture to enhance learning is key.

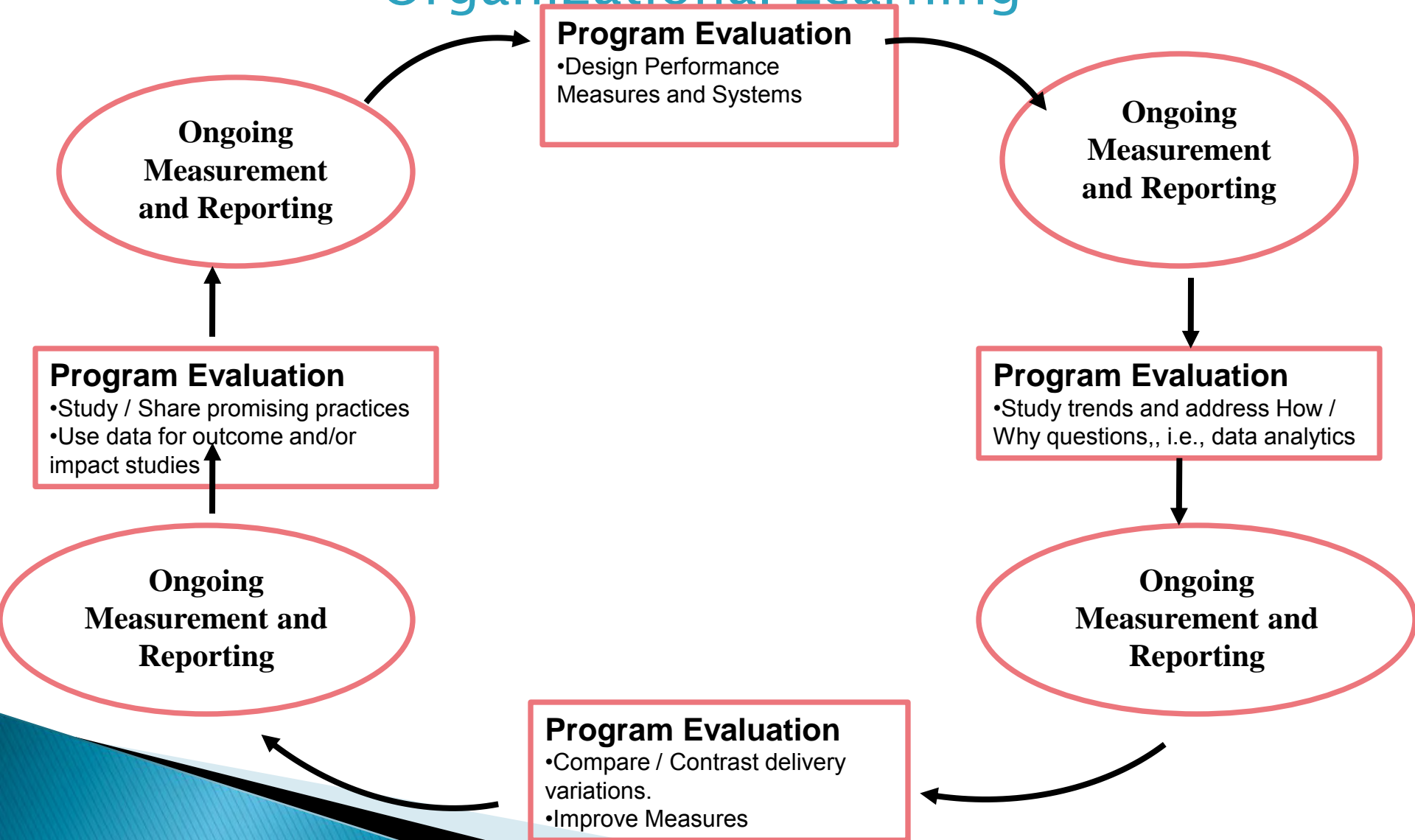
# What is Program Evaluation?

- ▶ Program evaluation refers to both a mind set and the application of analytical skills
- ▶ Evaluation includes:
  - using systematic social science tools to assess the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies and organizations to improve their effectiveness,
  - employing systematic *data* collection, analysis and *judgment* to address questions about program operations and results, and
  - both ongoing measurement and one-shot studies across the life cycle of programs.
- ▶ Framing the most appropriate questions to address in any evaluation work is the key

# Framing Useful Questions about Programs



# Program Evaluation Skills Should Infuse Performance Measurement and Enhance Organizational Learning



# Desired Outcome: Strategic Design to Promote Evaluation

- Evaluation should be treated as a management imperative, and designed in a strategic and holistic fashion
- Performance measurement processes should be designed and employed as one component of a strategic organization-wide evaluation approach, and better informed by program evaluation skills and standards, e.g., designs informed by theory of change, and measures informed by validity and reliability considerations
- The entire range of evaluation approaches, from qualitative and quantitative tools employed to assess to service quality, to cost effectiveness analyses to measure the results of regulations, should be embraced within the evaluation purview
- Evaluation should be situated within organizations to facilitate organizational learning, and staffed with experts in the specific field, as well as by representatives of multiple disciplines

# Desired Outcome: Strategic Use of Evaluation to Promote Organizational Learning

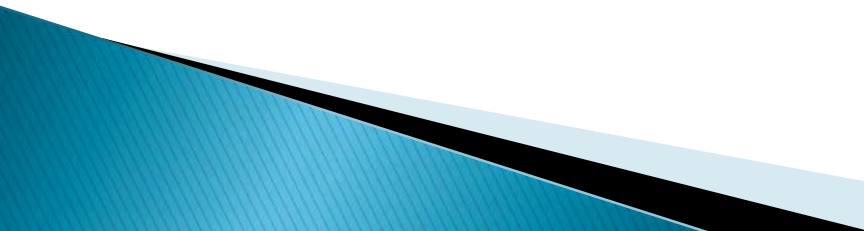
- Competencies in evaluative thinking and analysis are needed by managers and executives, as well as budget and financial staff
- Strengthening needed evaluation competencies across the organization should be viewed as within the mandate for an evaluation office, e.g, the EPA model

# Desired Outcome: Evaluation Competencies Held by Managers

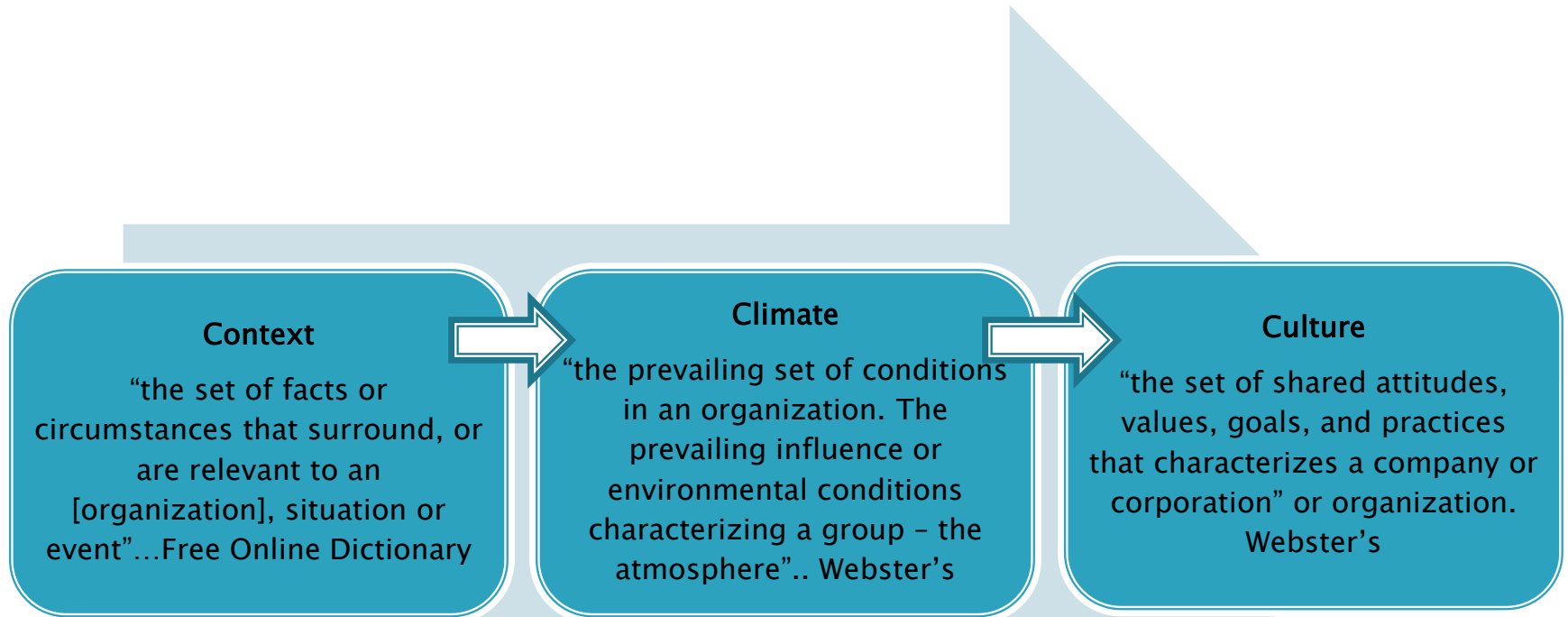
- ▶ Analyze the theory of change underlying programs and policies
- ▶ Frame useful questions about program implementation and results
- ▶ Involve stakeholders effectively to enhance evaluation efforts
- ▶ Assess the competence, relevance and sufficiency of evidence (data) obtained through performance measurement processes and evaluation studies
- ▶ Analyze trends/and interpret performance data
- ▶ Interpret cost effectiveness and cost benefit models



# Desired Outcome: Organizational Culture that is Receptive to Measurement and Evaluation

- ▶ Organization cultures can become more receptive to the use of evaluation and measurement – when top leaders are consistent in their commitment to both.
  - ▶ Clarity in intra-organizational communications is critical to shaping organizational culture, and is also affected by and modeled by top leadership.
  - ▶ Priority and capacity to promote continuous learning, and continual self-examination of current management practices and performance is also needed and shaped by top leadership.
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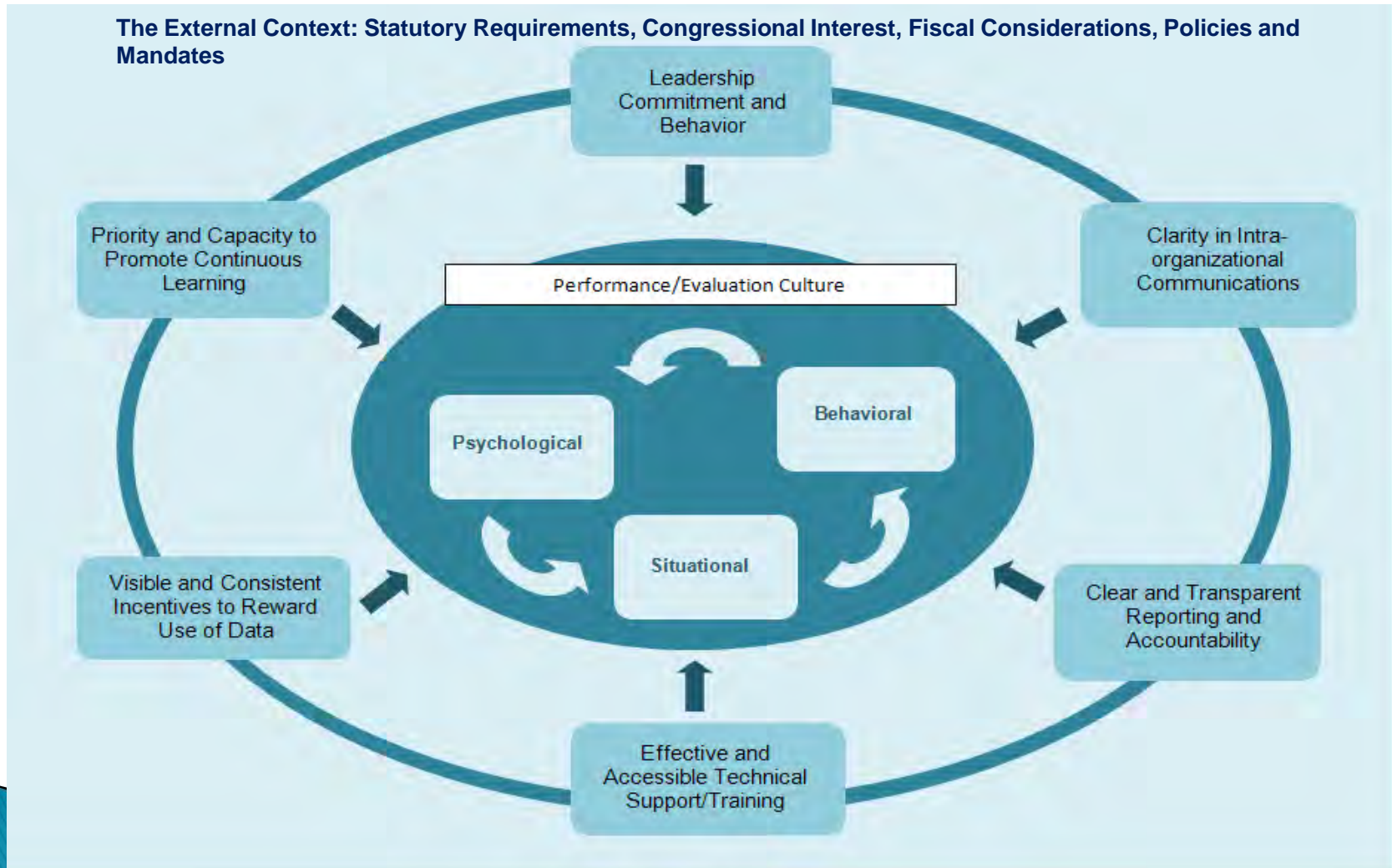
# The Use of Measurement and Evaluation Occurs Within Organizations and Is Affected by both External and Internal Conditions



# Current Context Affecting Measurement and Evaluation Within the Federal Government

- ▶ Statutory Requirements
  - GPRA 1993
  - GPRA Mod Act 2010
- ▶ Transparency and Reporting
  - Performance.gov Portal
  - ARRA Stimulus tracking
- ▶ Congressional Interest
- ▶ Fiscal
  - Budget Guidance
  - Budget Cuts
  - Debt/Deficit Choices
- ▶ Policies/Mandates
  - E.O. 13450
    - Performance Improvement Officer (PIO)
    - Performance Improvement Council
  - High Priority Performance Goals
  - Program Evaluation Initiative
  - Zients May 18, 2012 Memo on Evidence and Evaluation
  - Emphasis on Impact Evaluations and use of RCTs

# Predictors of an Organizational Culture that is Receptive to Measurement and Evaluation



# Our Research into Organizational Culture in Federal Agencies

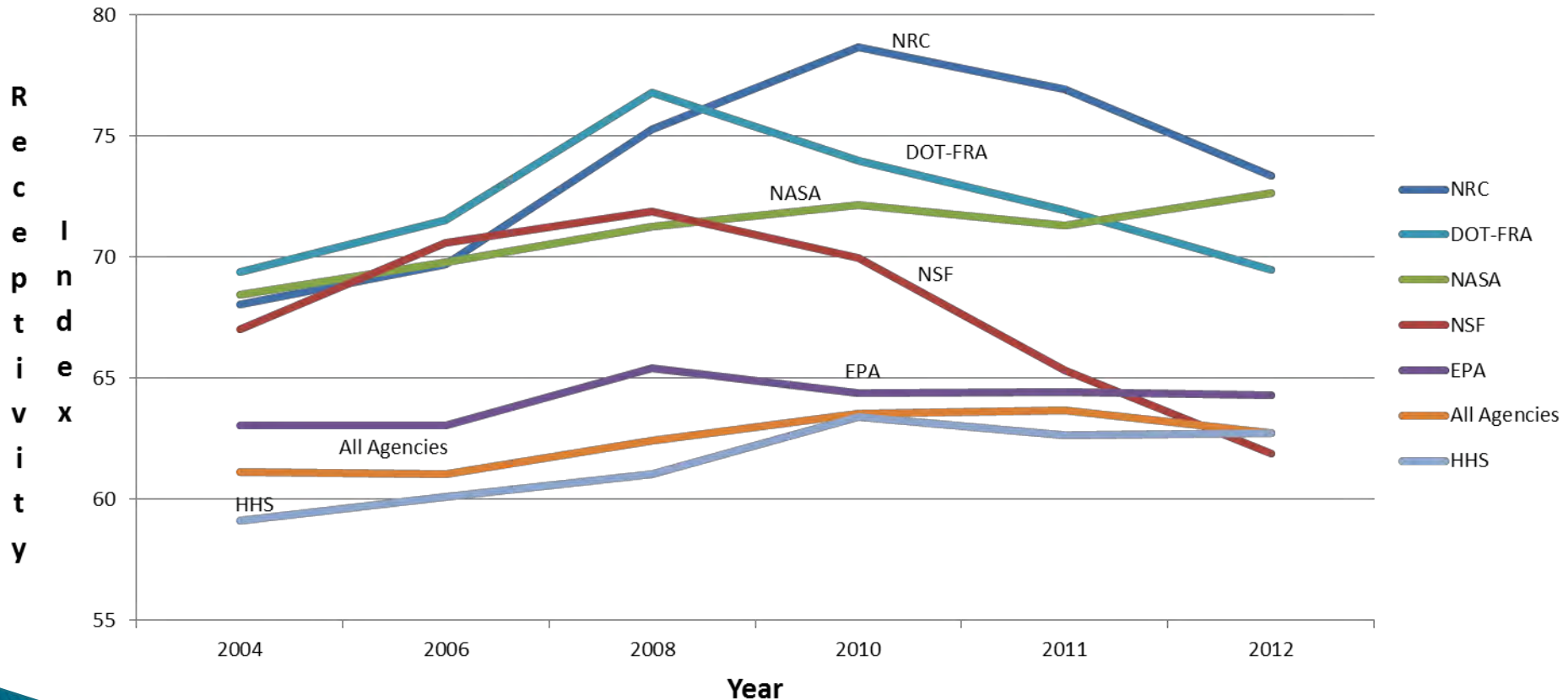
- ▶ Conducted Literature Review
- ▶ Interviewed staff from select agencies
- ▶ Examined Data Sources
  - OPM's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011 & 2012
  - GAO Surveys of Federal Managers Regarding Use of Performance Data 2007
- ▶ Established Criteria for Receptivity Index

# Our Receptivity to Measurement and Evaluation Index

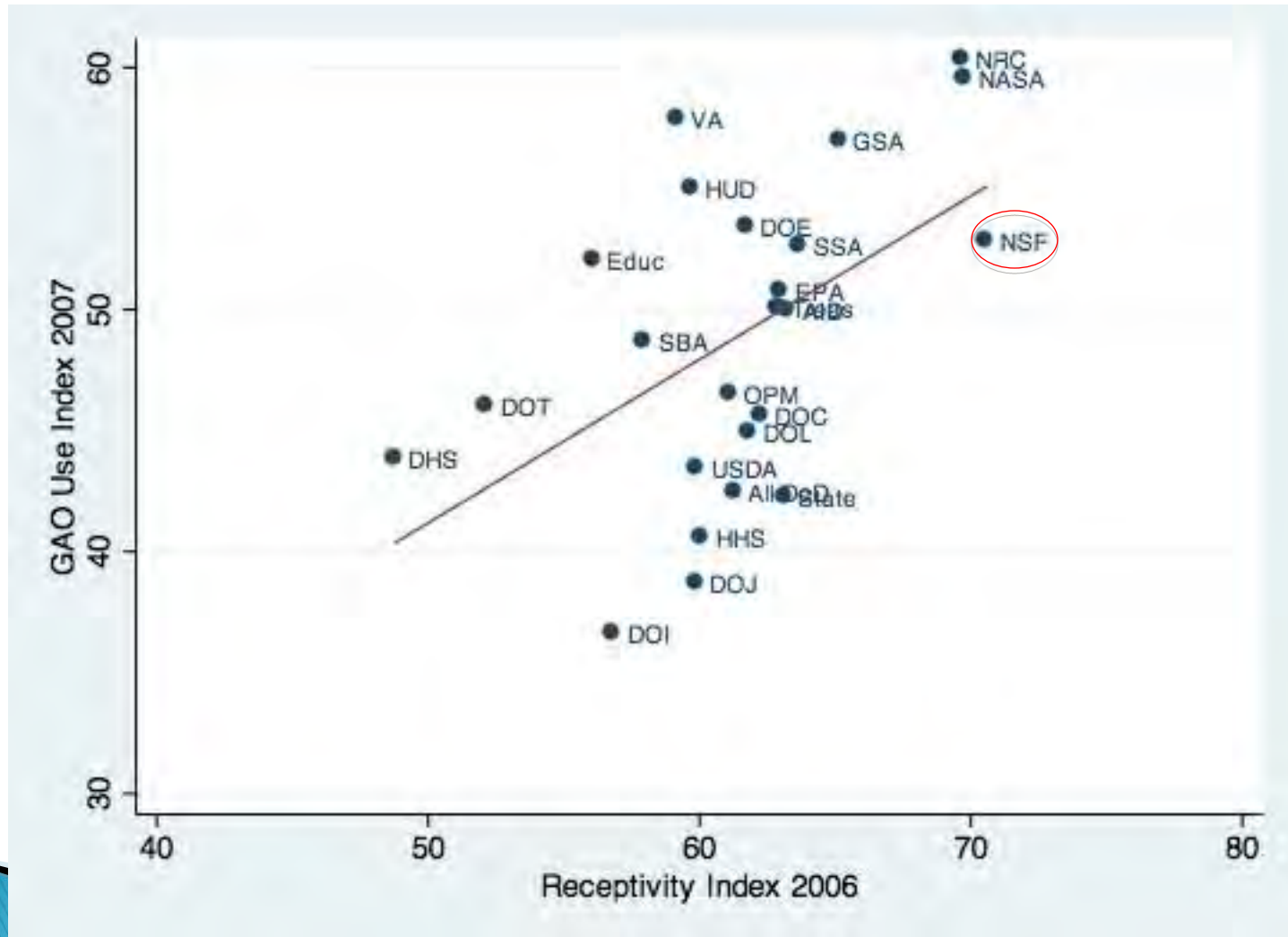
- Our Receptivity Index using OPM's Federal Viewpoint Data (% giving 4 or 5 on the scale) includes:
  - Employee Work Experiences
    - I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things
    - I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities
    - I am held accountable for achieving results
  - Agency
    - Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes
    - Creativity and innovation are rewarded
    - I believe the results of this survey will be used to make my agency a better place to work
  - Employee Supervisor/Team Leader
    - My supervisor/team leader listens to what I have to say
  - Agency Leadership
    - Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization
    - Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward goals and objectives

# How does receptivity to M & E in federal agencies vary across time?

Receptivity Index by Year for Selected Agencies



# GAO Use of Performance Data (2007) by Receptivity Index (2006)





# Thank you!!

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