BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS DE LIVRES

Wyatt Knowlton, L., & Phillips, C. C. (2013). *The Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 170 pages.

Reviewed by Sandra Sellick

Wyatt Knowlton and Phillips have built on the strong foundation of their first edition of *The Logic Model Guidebook* (2008). In the second edition, they have expanded the range of examples; updated the reference sections with texts, journal articles, and Internet resources; and added a very pragmatic chapter profiling the use of logic models in a range of settings. This is a book for evaluators at all stages of their professional training and practice. It contains sections to challenge, provoke, instruct, and inspire the reader and should prove to be a valuable tool.

The authors introduced their guidebook as "organized with the assumption that the reader has no knowledge or prior experience" (p. xiii), but their insightful analysis of the subject, illustrated with numerous examples, also provides a rich reference for readers with considerable knowledge and experience in the field of evaluation. At 170 pages, it is a compact book but it is not a quick read.

Why logic models? Wyatt Knowlton and Phillips offer many definitions and reasons for using logic models with one of the best being simply that "they are robust communication platforms that can anchor a shared construction that eventually serves strategy development, monitoring, evaluation, and learning" (p. 160).

The guidebook is divided into two equal parts. The first part focuses on construction and addresses the components of logic models with a detailed comparison of *theory of change* and *program logic* models. The first part also includes a full chapter on modelling, the process of creating logic models through collaboration with program stakeholders. The second part focuses on applications. This section explores the use of logic models for evaluation and expands the reader's un-

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derstanding of the power of logic models as tools in a diverse range of settings. The amusing arrangement of the table of contents as a logic model characterizes the integrated nature of the guidebook. By presenting the structure of the guidebook as a program change model, the authors suggest that the input they included in the eight chapters will lead to the anticipated outcomes of better models, better strategies, and great results for evaluators.

As an instructor, I appreciate many features of the guidebook for use as a textbook by students enrolled in evaluation coursework. Structures in the book to support student engagement include (a) explicit learner objectives at the outset of each chapter, (b) questions for reflection, (c) thoughtfully constructed application exercises to test and apply one's learning at the end of each chapter, and (d) a generous selection of references and supplemental readings for each chapter drawn from other texts, journal articles, and online resources. Acronyms and initials are used in moderation for a more engaging read. The authors' sparing use of parenthetical citations also makes the book accessible for a wider audience with credit given where it is due below figures and at the end of each chapter. In terms of readability, the guidebook has an approximate level of 16 based on the Flesch-Kincaid readability measure and a reading ease score of 27 (Adamovic, 2009). This means the guidebook has been written for a sophisticated reader but the writing style is more professional than academic in nature.

Throughout the guidebook, Wyatt Knowlton and Phillips have used models based on concepts introduced early in the text. This aspect of the guidebook illustrates how a logic model is developed through an iterative series of drafts and provides the reader with a schema for deeper comprehension as additional dimensions are added. A meticulous introduction is followed by numerous examples of logic models in a variety of settings to take the reader deeper in an understanding of the subject.

Evaluation practitioners should not be deterred by the textbook features of the guidebook. This work goes beyond the needs of students, to address dilemmas and nuances that experienced evaluators will surely find thought-provoking even after years of experience working with logic models. For example, the authors remind the reader that "because logic models are socially constructed, perception, politics, and persuasion are all substantial influences on them" (p. 87). This should resonate with practitioners and lead them to draw on the

mentorship the authors have offered via the insights shared in this work. The guidebook carries a logic-model-specific vocabulary, and readers should be prepared to linger over words such as burden, dose, strands, proxy indicators, and toggling. No glossary is included, but the subject index serves effectively in this regard.

With the depth of analysis, the tests for a worthy model design, and the breadth of the authors' criteria for an excellent model, one potential caution for readers is that the guidebook may significantly increase the proportion of time spent on modelling during an evaluation. This could incur more cost in terms of time, but the benefits outweigh such a potential drawback if they raise the bar within the community of evaluators for quality modelling practice.

In discussions of credentialing, rigour, and value, Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) members have articulated the need to update professional development workshops sanctioned by the CES on a regular basis. This book would clearly be of use as a complementary resource in a future revision of the intermediate logic model workshop or in the design of more advanced logic model workshops.

In summary, *The Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results* would make an excellent addition to the bookshelf of any evaluator and should definitely be in the collection of any library used by students in the field of evaluation. Readers will respect the depth of the authors' knowledge and experience and appreciate the service they have provided to the evaluation community by preparing a second edition of this informative guidebook.

REFERENCES

Adamovic, M. (2009). *Readability calculator*. Retrieved from http://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp