



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
**MIKE ILITCH**  
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WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
**STEAM CHALLENGE**



WAYNE STATE  
School of Social Work

# Assessing Community Needs and Developing a Theory of Change

Venture Development Lunch and Learn Workshop

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# INTRODUCTIONS AND WORKSHOP OVERVIEW



WHO IS IN THE ROOM?



WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT  
IDEA?



# WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

Develop a clear understanding and distinction between conditions and needs

Understand the value of identifying needs

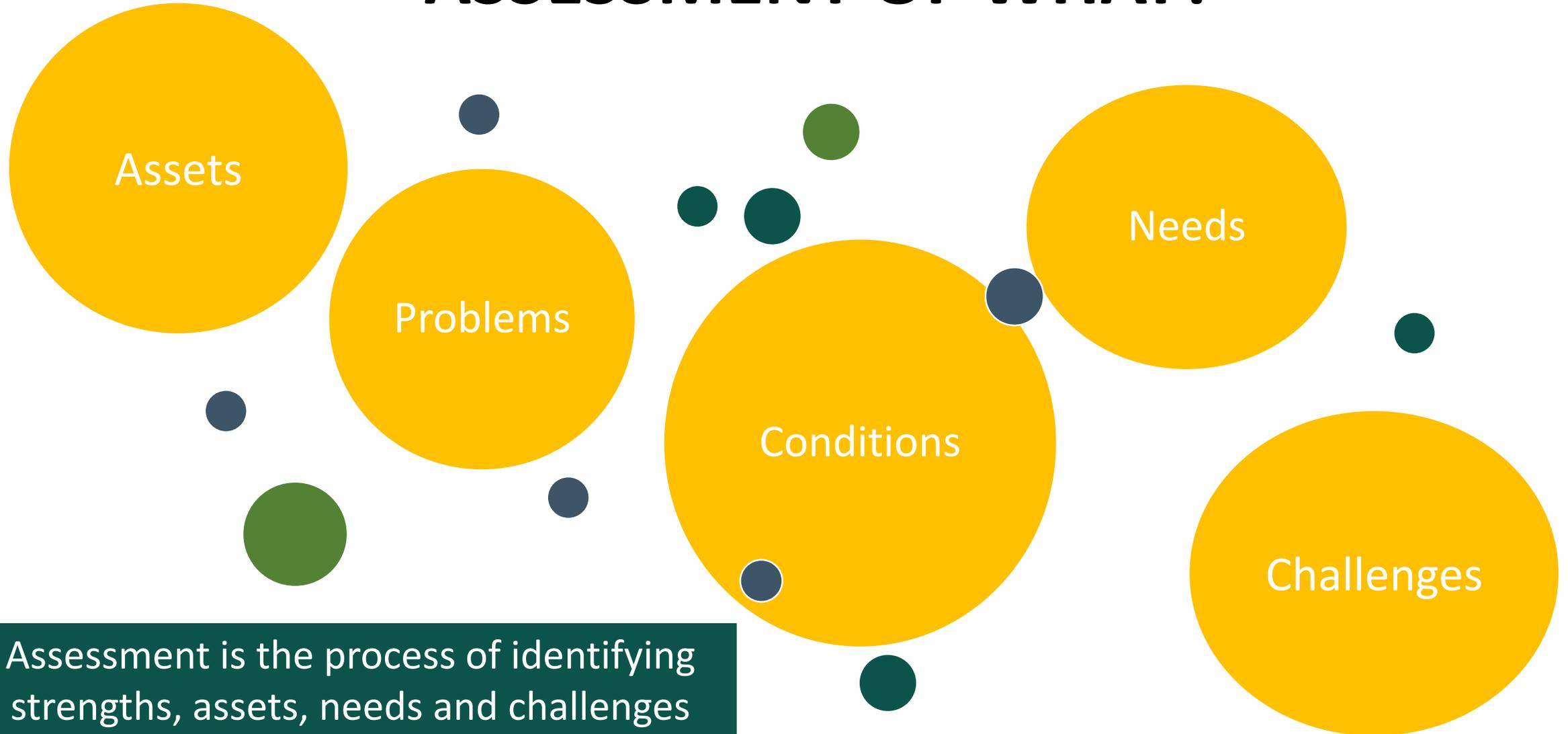
Know the purpose of articulating a theory of change underlying a new venture

Identify and define the elements of a logic model

Apply logic modeling to your STEAM idea

Develop a theory of change for your STEAM idea

# ASSESSMENT OF WHAT?



The facts, or a statistical representation of the phenomenon under study

Example: 9.4% of Americans have diabetes

- How many people are experiencing the condition, who they are, where they live, and for how many the condition is mild, moderate or severe

**WHAT ARE  
CONDITIONS?**

# CONDITIONS vs. PROBLEMS



CONDITION

PROBLEM

- Conditions move to be problems when you bring a frame a reference to bear, shaped by a value system



CONDITION

PROBLEM

- Conditions become problems when they are judged to be negative, harmful or pathological



Participant brainstorming



Benefits and challenges

**WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT TO  
ASSESS NEEDS?**

# WHAT IS A NEED?



# WHAT IS A NEED?

The value judgment that some group has a problem that can be solved

- People with different values will recognize different needs
- Perceiving need and the person experiencing need may differ

Example: Insufficient # of physicians in rural areas

Need is elastic – estimating in the moment

Discrepancy between what is and what should be

# BRADSHAW'S TYPOLOGY OF NEED

Normative

Felt or Perceived

Expressed

Comparative or Relative

A need identified according to a norm (or standard), usually set by professionals and experts, or by those in authority

### Examples of standards:

- Minimum number of prenatal visits
- Timing of immunizations for infants and children (measles vaccinations must take place at 12-15 months and 4-6 years of age)
- School curriculum requirements
- Housing codes
- Pollution or water quality standards

**IDENTIFYING  
NEEDS:  
NORMATIVE**

**IDENTIFYING  
NEEDS:  
FELT OR  
PERCEIVED**

The views or wants of those who are experiencing the problem or those who speak on their behalf

**Examples:**

- Family members
- Reps of voluntary associations (churches, immigrants, neighborhood associations, prison watch groups)
- Specialized advocacy organizations (MADD, Multiple Sclerosis Society, NRA, AARP).

Expectations based on the behavior of the target population

A perceived need that is acted on when members of a target population request a service

**IDENTIFYING  
NEEDS:  
EXPRESSED**

**IDENTIFYING  
NEEDS:  
COMPARATIVE  
OR RELATIVE**

The condition of individuals, a community, or an area that falls significantly below the average or generally accepted level of that condition among comparable groups, communities, or areas.

Based on comparison to and equity with others

## Normative

- What evidence will be used to establish norm?

## Felt

- How to measure felt need which is not expressed?

## Expressed

- How to distinguish 'real' from 'artificial' needs?

## Comparative

- Which are the appropriate comparison groups?

# CHALLENGES IN ASSESSING NEEDS

# METHODS USED TO ASSESS NEEDS



## Normative

- Interviews with key informants, web-based surveys of staff, Census data, scientific reports, evidence-based practices

## Felt

- Interviews with customers/clients, focus groups with parents, youth, users of current services, surveys of residents/customers/target population

## Expressed

- Admission data, drug court data, number of likes, intake data, wait lists

## Comparative

- Rates of disorder, water quality measures, mortality rates, morbidity rates

**WHAT KINDS OF  
EVIDENCE IS  
NEEDED TO  
ESTABLISH  
NEEDS?**

# EXERCISE 1

What kind of evidence do you have to demonstrate the need for your idea?

# WHAT IS A "THEORY OF CHANGE"?



**Definition:** A statement of a proposed relationship between program or service and some desired outcome.

Understanding of the causes of the problem >  
Implied in your intervention > Expected outcomes

Know the purpose of articulating a theory of change underlying a new venture

# THEORY OF CHANGE

# EXERCISE 2

## Theory of Change

Write a sentence that reflects your theory of change: "If we provide \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_ will happen"

# LOGIC MODELS

**Definition:** A Logic Model provides a description of how the program theoretically works to achieve benefits for participants. It is the “if-then” sequence of changes that the program intends to set in motion through its inputs, activities, and outputs.

A visual model used to present and share your understanding of the relationships between resources, activities and changes, or results you hope to achieve

All ideas are born via logic models

# USES OF A LOGIC MODEL



Grounds your idea in a framework of needs and goals



Helps to think through planning process, how all elements relate to other elements



Useful tool, identifies all of the steps to carry out your idea

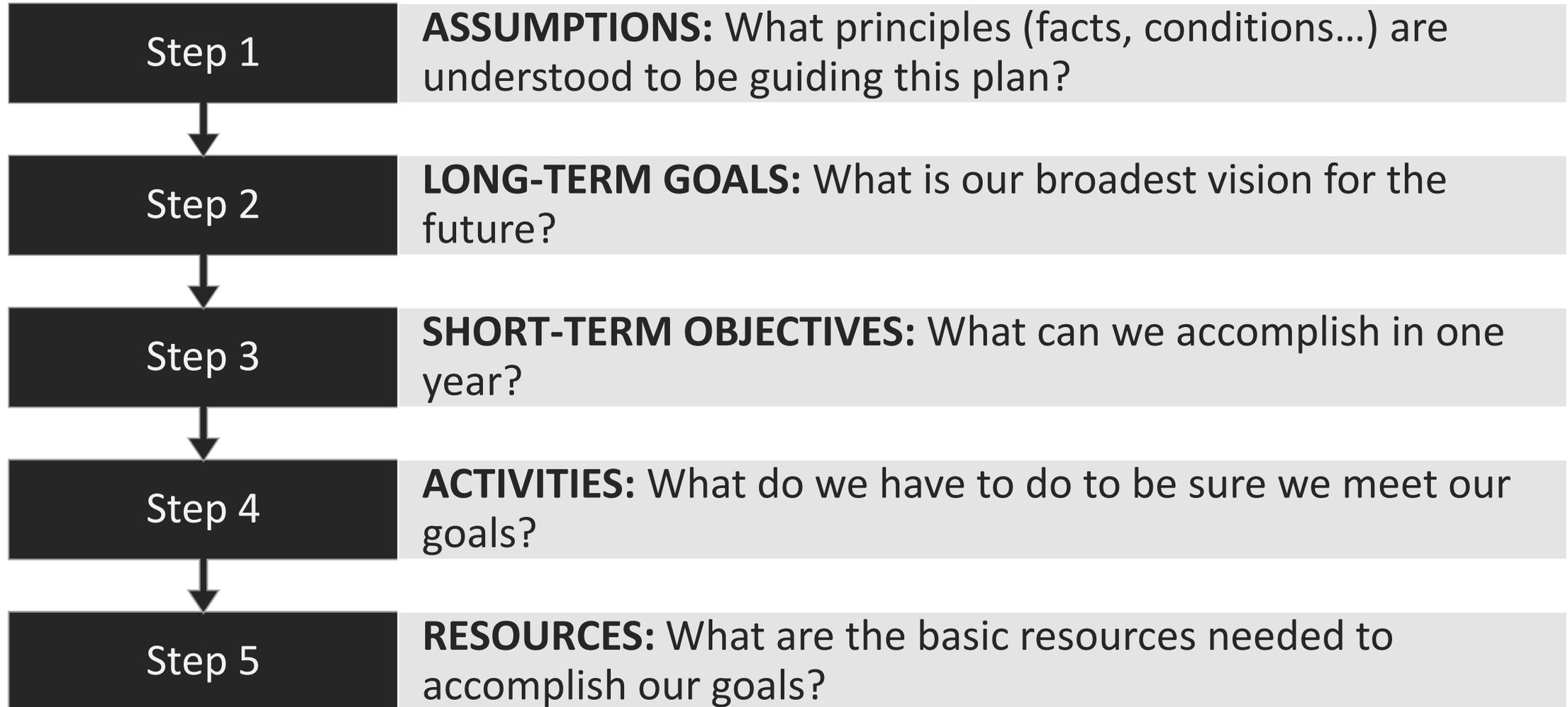


Provides a clear framework for evaluation because outcomes are specified



Multiple applications

# ELEMENTS OF A LOGIC MODEL



# VISUALLY, IT'S PLANNING BACKWARDS...



Step 1	Step 5	Step 4	Step 3	Step 2
ASSUMPTIONS	RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES	LONG-TERM GOALS

# ...BUT YOU IMPLEMENT FOWARD



Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
ASSUMPTIONS	RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES	LONG-TERM GOALS

# EXERCISE 3

Model the logic of your idea!

What are your assumptions about what is going on with and around the target group and environment?

What are your perceptions of the needs and problems for the target population, and what evidence do you have to support these perceptions?

Facts or conditions about needs and the problem

Statements concerning the effectiveness of the program

Evidence that is guiding you in developing your idea

## **STEP 1: ASSUMPTIONS**

## STEP 2: LONG-TERM IMPACTS

This is your broad vision for the future

What conditions do you see for the target population? Where do you want to go?

Frame as positive statements if possible

Keep realistic

These are tied to specific  
program outcomes

What results can you expect?  
What are your objectives?

**STEP 3:  
SHORT-TERM  
OBJECTIVES**

**STEP 4:**

# **ACTIVITIES**

What do we have to do to ensure our goals and objectives will be met?

Implementation steps:  
methods and tasks that will take you to your goals.

What are the basics needed to accomplish your goals?

What are the needs for staff, materials, volunteers, community support, transportation, etc...?

Specific expertise

Physical labor

Community support

Required materials

## STEP 5: RESOURCES

# KEY IDEAS TO REMEMBER

There is no one exact perfect logic model for any program - aim for complete and consistent

Logic models are dynamic and they change with experience, influx of resources, change in stakeholders, etc.

More inclusive the group is that identifies the needs, goals, objectives and finalizes the logic model, the more likely it is to be of value

Level of detail depends on purpose of model; to communicate with broad audiences, keep it simple. For purposes in evaluation we usually include more detail; for planning it is used to visually convey the program idea in succinct

Multiple logic models may be needed; one for a city wide effort, school district effort and separate models for specific components

# LARGE GROUP REFLECTION AND DEBRIEF



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**GOOD LUCK!**