



nuts & bolts

HELPING YOU NAVIGATE THE TECHNICAL SIDE
OF SOCIAL IMPACT

2019 | Q4

Welcome to our newsletter, we're so glad to have you in our virtual community. We chose to call this quarterly newsletter **nuts & bolts** because we want to present essential or basic aspects of research, monitoring, evaluation, as well as grant-seeking and grant-writing in the nonprofit world. Our desire is to help you navigate through the more technical side of *social impact*.

Empowerment and capacity building are at the core of who we are, so we want this newsletter to be useful to *you*. In every edition, we will highlight four things that could help you expand your knowledge base and learn from our experiences in the field. We encourage you to reach out to us with your questions or areas to highlight in each newsletter. Follow the icons: →



TERM TO KNOW

WE HIGHLIGHT WORDS YOU MIGHT KNOW, OTHERS YOU MIGHT NOT BUT NEED TO.



ARTICLE

WE ADDRESS ISSUES IN THE FIELD, SHARING FIRST-HAND LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES.



PRACTICAL RESOURCE

WE IDENTIFY USEFUL RESOURCES IN THE FIELD, IDENTIFYING SPECIFIC NOTEWORTHY AREAS.



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WE PROVIDE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS, SO SEND THEM IN TO US: NONPROFIT@ELITERESEARCH.COM

The **nuts & bolts** for this quarter include:



POWER ANALYSIS

You probably know that you need a sufficient sample size to be able to generalize findings about a particular population. Power analysis goes a step beyond just ensuring a representative sample size in order to determine what sample size is necessary to facilitate statistically significant results based on the expected effect size, which is the difference between groups or across an intervention. The statistical power of a study depends upon whether you anticipate a large, medium or small difference between comparison groups as well as what type of analysis test will be used to evaluate the differences. Studies with low statistical power often fail to reveal significant findings where some differences may actually exist because the probability of finding an existing effect is just too low to be confident. Power analysis is a critical step in optimizing the likelihood of finding meaning in analysis without surveying too many or too few participants. Make sure your study is properly powered!



COUNTERING THE “OVERHEAD MYTH” THROUGH EVALUATION

Successful nonprofits need sustainable scalability to produce greater impact. Strategic spending in areas deemed “overhead” is critical in accomplishing this growth, but prevents several challenges to organizational leadership. “Overhead” seems to be the proverbial dirty word within the nonprofit arena. But why? The turn of the century saw the advent of the “Overhead Myth” defined as “the false conception that financial ratios are the sole indicator of nonprofit performance.” The notion of evaluating nonprofits and charities based primarily on the amount of money spent on fixed overhead expenses compared to money spent directly on programming to facilitate change has some merit and makes sense. However, void of additional context and evaluation metrics... [read the rest of the article](#)

- Read more articles and whitepapers [here](#)
- Suggested watch: Dan Pallotta in his Ted Talk titled, [The Way We Think About Charity Is Dead Wrong](#)



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NONPROFITS

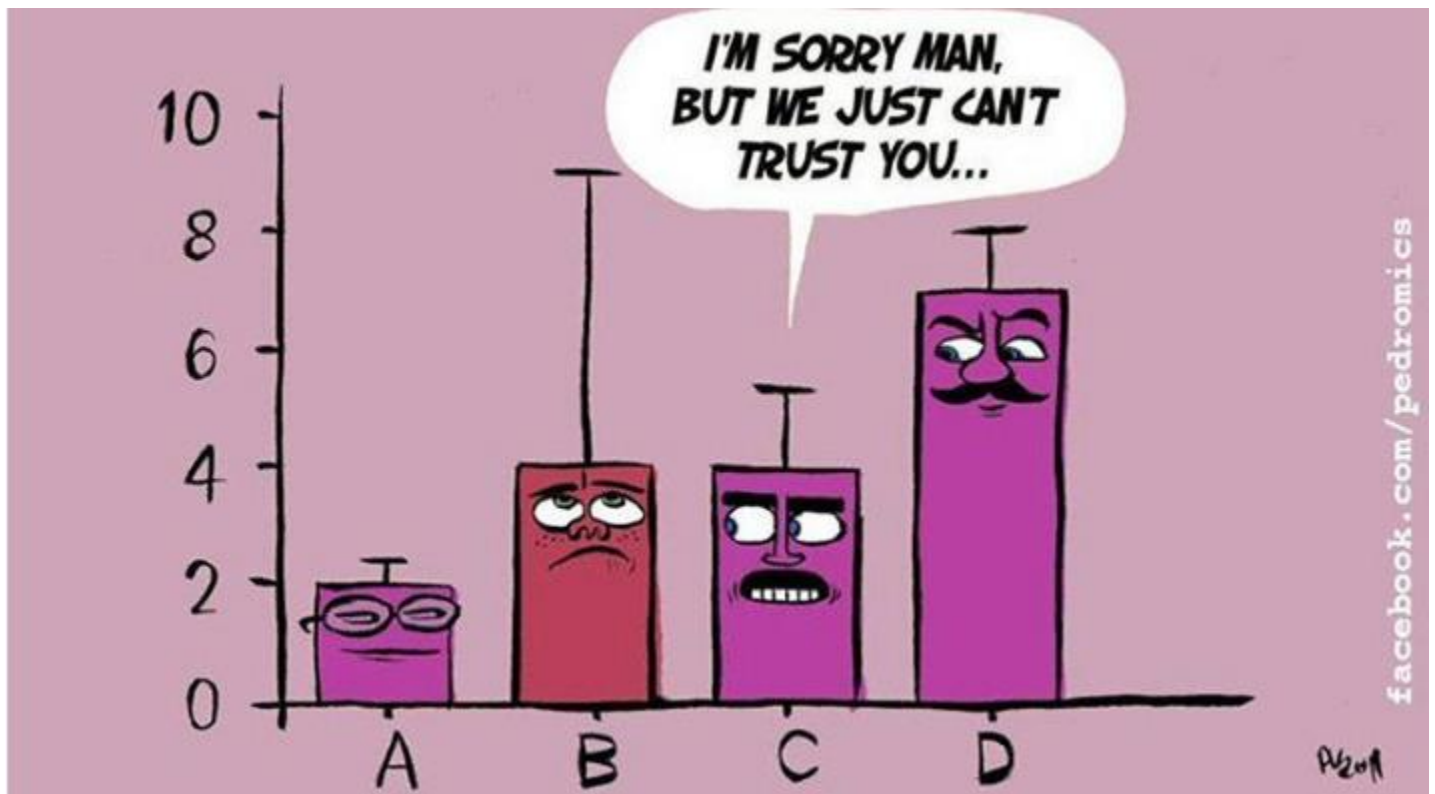
The National Council of Nonprofits (Council of Nonprofits) is a trusted resource and proven advocate for America’s charitable nonprofits. Connecting the policy dots across all levels and branches of governments, the Council of Nonprofits keeps nonprofits informed and empowered to create a positive public policy environment that best supports nonprofits in advancing their missions. Working with and through the nation’s largest network of nonprofits—with 25,000-plus organizational members—we identify emerging trends, share proven practices, and promote solutions that benefit charitable nonprofits and the communities they serve. Check out the Council’s page on Evaluation & Outcome Measurement at <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/evaluation-and-measurement-of-outcomes>



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROCESS, IMPACT, AND OUTCOME EVALUATION?

Process evaluation examines whether the program was carried out as planned. Results may indicate the strengths or weaknesses of the program, allowing for improvements along the way. In academia, these are referred to as formative assessments. Unfortunately, impact and outcome evaluations are not as clearly defined – in many circles, these two terms are interchangeable, while in others they mean very different things. For us, impact assessment examines whether or not a change has been made and to what degree (the program effect). Outcome evaluation examines whether or not, and to what extent, the pre-determined outcomes to the program were met. In academia, both impact and outcome evaluations are *summative* evaluations, as they “sum up” the findings and determine how successful the program was at achieving its goals.

And just for fun... 😊



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