

Traffic Safety Culture is defined as the shared belief system of a group of people, which influences road user behaviors and stakeholder actions that impact traffic safety.¹



OVERVIEW

We all want to be effective in our role to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries. But how do we know our traffic safety culture strategies are effective?

“Evaluative thinking” is a problem-solving approach that seeks credible evidence to provide answers about the effectiveness and sustainability of traffic safety strategies.

Evaluative thinking is a cognitive process in the context of evaluation, motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of the evidence, that involves skills such as identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and perspective-taking and making informed decisions in preparation for action.²

This project tried to develop guidance to help traffic safety practitioners bolster their knowledge about evaluation and include evaluation in their proposal requests and activities involving traffic safety culture strategies.

TRAFFIC SAFETY CULTURE STRATEGIES

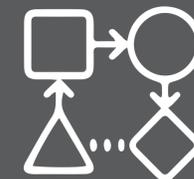
What is different about strategies to change traffic safety culture? Traffic safety culture strategies use specific experiences designed to change beliefs.

Traffic safety culture strategies are designed to change beliefs as the mechanism for changing behaviors that are relevant to traffic safety. The assumption is that changes in behavior will not be sustainable unless the beliefs that support those behaviors are also changed. This process is summarized in Figure 1.

Understanding how a traffic safety culture strategy leads to improving traffic safety is important when designing an evaluation. Such evaluations need to include evidence not only about changes in behavior, but also changes in beliefs that support those behaviors and the outcomes that result from those behaviors.



Figure 1. Diagram of how a traffic safety culture (TSC) strategy leads to improved traffic safety



EVALUATION GUIDANCE

1. Identify, Recruit, and Engage Stakeholders.

2. Describe the Strategy

3. Identify Data Measures and Comparisons to Be Performed.

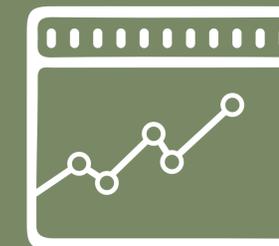
4. Make Meaning.

5. Accumulate and Share Wisdom

EVALUATION THINKING

Many traffic safety practitioners and stakeholders already engage in forms of evaluative thinking. Discussing the value of evaluative thinking within the traffic safety community will grow its importance. Here are some talking points to foster new conversations about the importance of evaluative thinking.

1. Evaluations inform which strategies are effective and generate knowledge about how to make strategies more effective and sustainable.
2. Traffic safety practitioners can seek opportunities to include process, outcome, and impact evaluations in the projects they implement, manage, and fund.
3. Effective evaluations require quality data and appropriate comparisons.
4. Evaluations should include engaging stakeholders, developing careful descriptions of strategies, and identifying quality data and appropriate comparisons.
5. Traffic safety practitioners can create opportunities to review and discuss evaluation results with stakeholders to gather lessons learned and identify opportunities for improvement in future efforts.
6. More consistent and rigorous evaluations will accelerate learning and effectiveness of strategies in improving traffic safety.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Project URL: Pending



References

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- 2 Archibald, T. (2013). "Evaluative Thinking." Free Range Evaluation, WordPress, Retrieved July 27, 2020 from <https://tgar-chibald.wordpress.com/2013/11/11/18/>.