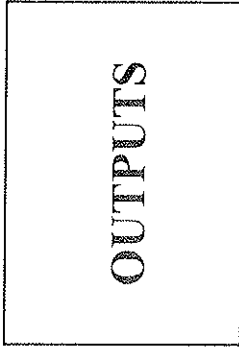
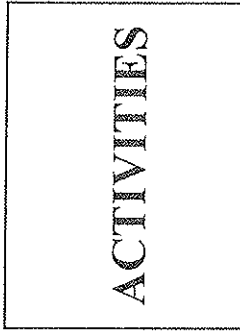
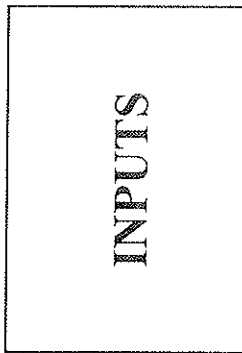
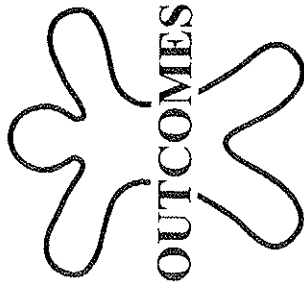


Exhibit A

Summary of Program Outcome Model



■ Resources dedicated to or consumed by the program

e.g.

- ✓ money
- ✓ staff & staff time
- ✓ volunteers & volunteer time
- ✓ facilities
- ✓ equipment & supplies

■ Constraints on the program

e.g.

- ✓ laws
- ✓ regulations
- ✓ funders' requirements

■ What the program does with inputs to fulfill its mission

e.g.

- ✓ feed and shelter homeless families
- ✓ provide job training
- ✓ educate the public about signs of child abuse
- ✓ counsel pregnant women
- ✓ create mentoring relationships for youth

■ The direct products of program activities

e.g.

- ✓ number of classes taught
- ✓ number of counseling sessions conducted
- ✓ number of educational materials distributed
- ✓ hours of service delivered
- ✓ number of participants served

■ Benefits for participants during or after program activities

e.g.

- ✓ new knowledge
- ✓ increased skills
- ✓ changed attitudes or values
- ✓ modified behavior
- ✓ improved condition
- ✓ altered status

What is Outcome Measurement?

Outcome measurement is the process and set of procedures for assessing, on a regular basis, the results of an agency's programs for its participants. Traditionally, United Ways have requested information from agencies on *inputs*, *activities*, and *outputs*.

- **Inputs** include resources dedicated to or consumed by the program. Examples are money, staff and staff time, volunteers and volunteer time, facilities, equipment, and supplies. For instance, inputs for a parent education class include the hours of staff time spent designing and delivering the program. Inputs also include constraints on the program, such as laws, regulations and requirements for receipt of funding.
- **Activities** are what the program does with the inputs to fulfill its mission. Activities include the strategies, techniques, and types of treatment that comprise the program's service methodology. For instance, sheltering and feeding homeless families are program activities, as are training and counseling homeless adults to help them prepare for and find jobs.
- **Outputs** are the direct products of program operation and usually are measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished – for example, the numbers of classes taught, counseling sessions conducted, educational materials distributed and participants served. Outputs have little inherent value in themselves. They are important because they are intended to lead to a desired benefit for participants or target populations.
- **Outcomes** are benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities. They are influenced by a program's outputs. Outcomes may relate to knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, behavior, condition or other attributes. They are what participants know, think or can do; or how they behave; or what their condition is, that is different following the program.

For example, in a program to counsel families on financial management, outputs – what the service produces – include the number of financial planning sessions conducted and the number of families seen. The desired outcomes – the changes sought in participants' behavior or status – can include their developing and living within a budget, making monthly additions to a savings account, and having increased financial stability.

In another example, outputs of a neighborhood clean-up campaign can be the number of organizing meetings held and the number of weekends dedicated to the clean-up effort. Outcomes – benefits to the target population – might include reduced exposure to safety hazards and increased feelings of neighborhood pride. Exhibit A depicts the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

- **Initial outcomes** are the first benefits or changes participants experience, and are the ones most closely related to and influenced by the program's outputs. Often, initial outcomes are changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes or skills. They are not ends in themselves, and may not be especially meaningful in terms of the quality of

participants' lives. However, they are necessary steps toward the desired ends, and therefore are important as indicators of participants' progress toward those ends.

- **Intermediate outcomes** link a program's initial outcomes to the longer-term outcomes it desires for participants. They often are changes in behavior that result from participants' new knowledge, attitudes or skills.
- **Longer-term outcomes** are the ultimate outcomes a program desires to achieve for its participants. They represent meaningful changes for participants, often in their condition or status. Although the program may hope that participants go even farther in their growth and development and that similar changes will occur throughout the larger community, the program's longer-term outcomes are the most removed benefits that it can reasonably expect to influence.

Outcomes sometimes are confused with outcome *indicators*, which are the specific items of data that are tracked to measure how well a program is achieving an outcome, and with outcome *targets*, which are objectives for a program's level of achievement.

For example, in a youth development program that creates internship opportunities for high school youth, an *outcome* might be that participants develop expanded views of their career options. An *indicator* of how well the program is succeeding on this outcome could be the number and percent of participants who list more careers of interest to them at the end of the program than they did at the beginning of the program. A *target* might be that *40 percent of participants list at least two more careers* after completing the program than they did when they started it.

Things to remember:

- Everything that is measurable isn't worthwhile. And everything that is worthwhile isn't measurable.
- Keep it simple. It's basically what's the problem, what are you going to do about it, and how do you know that it got done.
- "If a knife appears in the first act, it has to reappear in the final act." Problems should have corresponding impact. Activities should have corresponding accomplishments.
- Use measures and indicators that are straightforward and appeal to common sense. This is not a Ph.D. project.
- Aim for the most credible type of measurement that is feasible for your program. We are not a research laboratory.
- Focus on the impact on the recipient and community, not the volunteer.
- Use objective tests when possible. Avoid relying on self-assessments, particularly those that deal with satisfaction.
- Measure to determine the problem. Measure to determine the impact.
- Be specific, avoid general statements.
- Review your proposal, particularly the outcome worksheet, from the perspective of a funding agency that is concerned that it is investing **scarce funds** to address specific problems that **it** feels are significant. Are you giving the best return on the funding agency's investment?
- This is the beginning. We don't know the answers.

Above information from document titled "Hammer's Rules of Thumb" dated 2/3/1997.

Other things that I would note from experiences with United Way of Cascade County's allocations process:

- Make sure you know the purpose of the program you are proposing for funding. Just because a volunteer asks about a "different" approach or "outcome" doesn't mean you should change to suit their thought.
- Be prepared to explain in plain English how the measures/indicators prove you are achieving your stated outcome.
- Examples of success for existing programs should be highlighted, new programs should have a very strong rationale or proven best practice to support the theory of change.