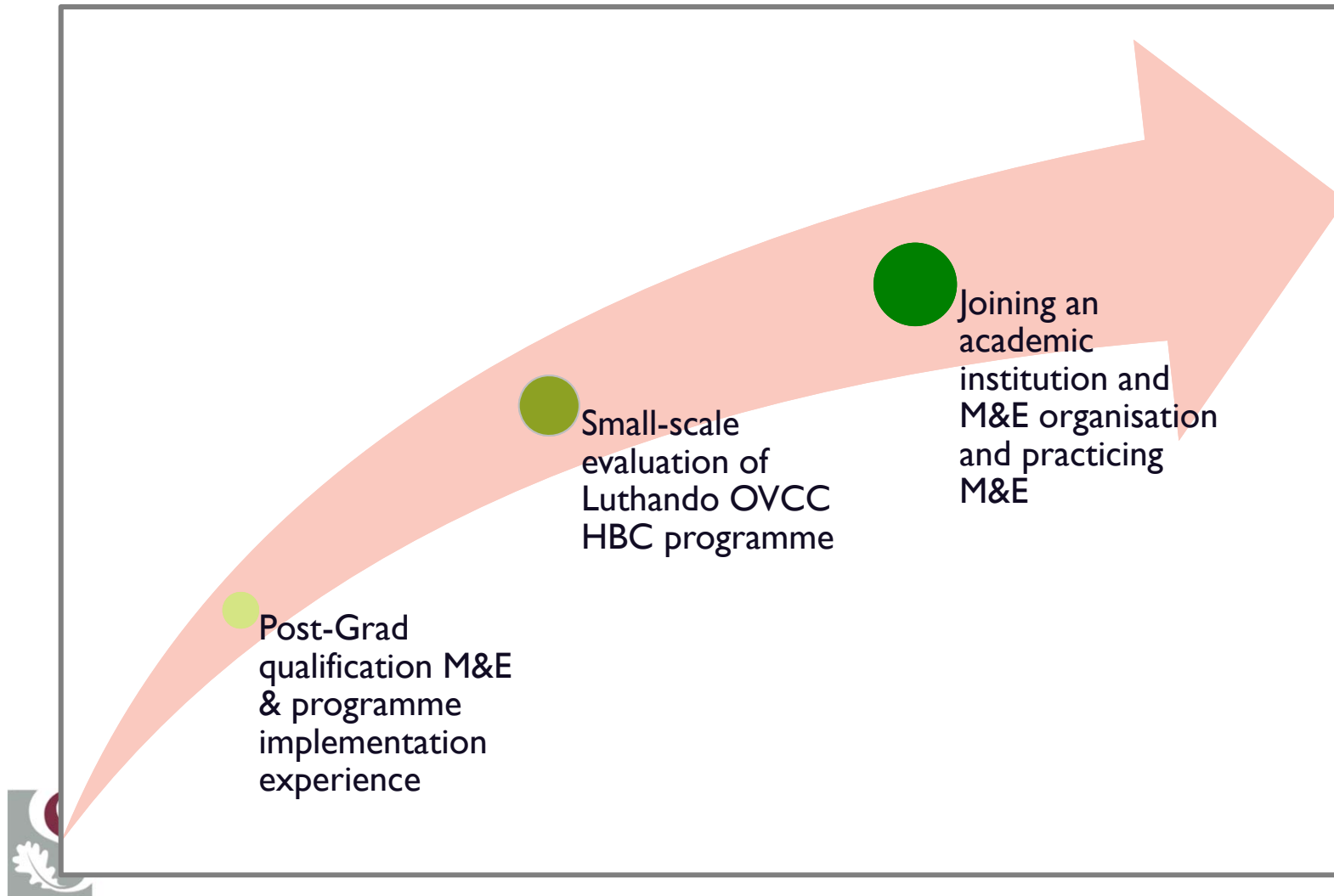




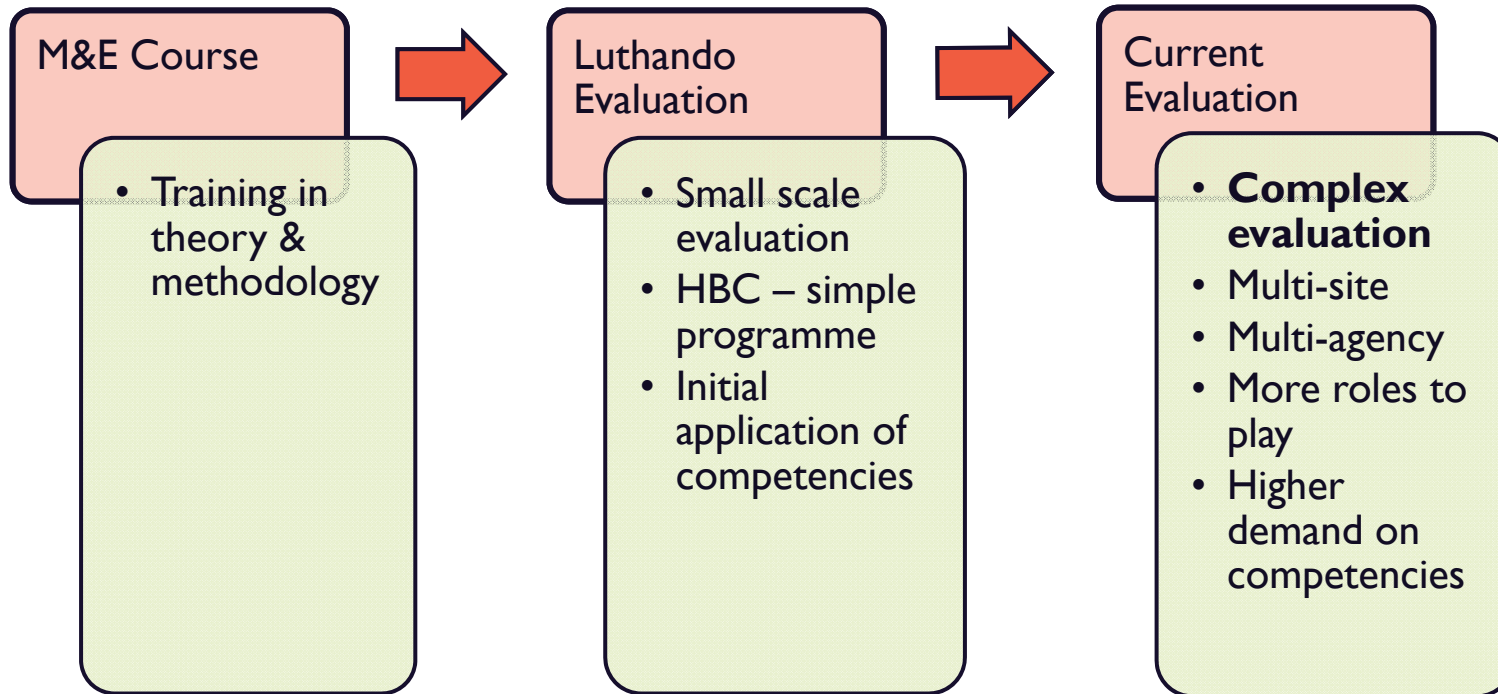
Reflections of an Emerging Evaluator Rhoda Goremucheche: CREST



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From theory to practice



Step I: Masters in Monitoring and evaluation



M&E course work laid the theoretical foundation, training in methodology & data analysis skills e.g. analysis software



Understanding evaluation types & approaches

Understanding evaluation designs

Understanding methodology

SPSS and ATLAS.ti



Step 2: Small scale academic evaluation



Evaluation of Luthando OVCC HBC programme was my first contact with the world of evaluation

- ◆ Uncertain about what I was doing
- ◆ I was unsupervised
- ◆ Large expectations from organisation from an academic exercise



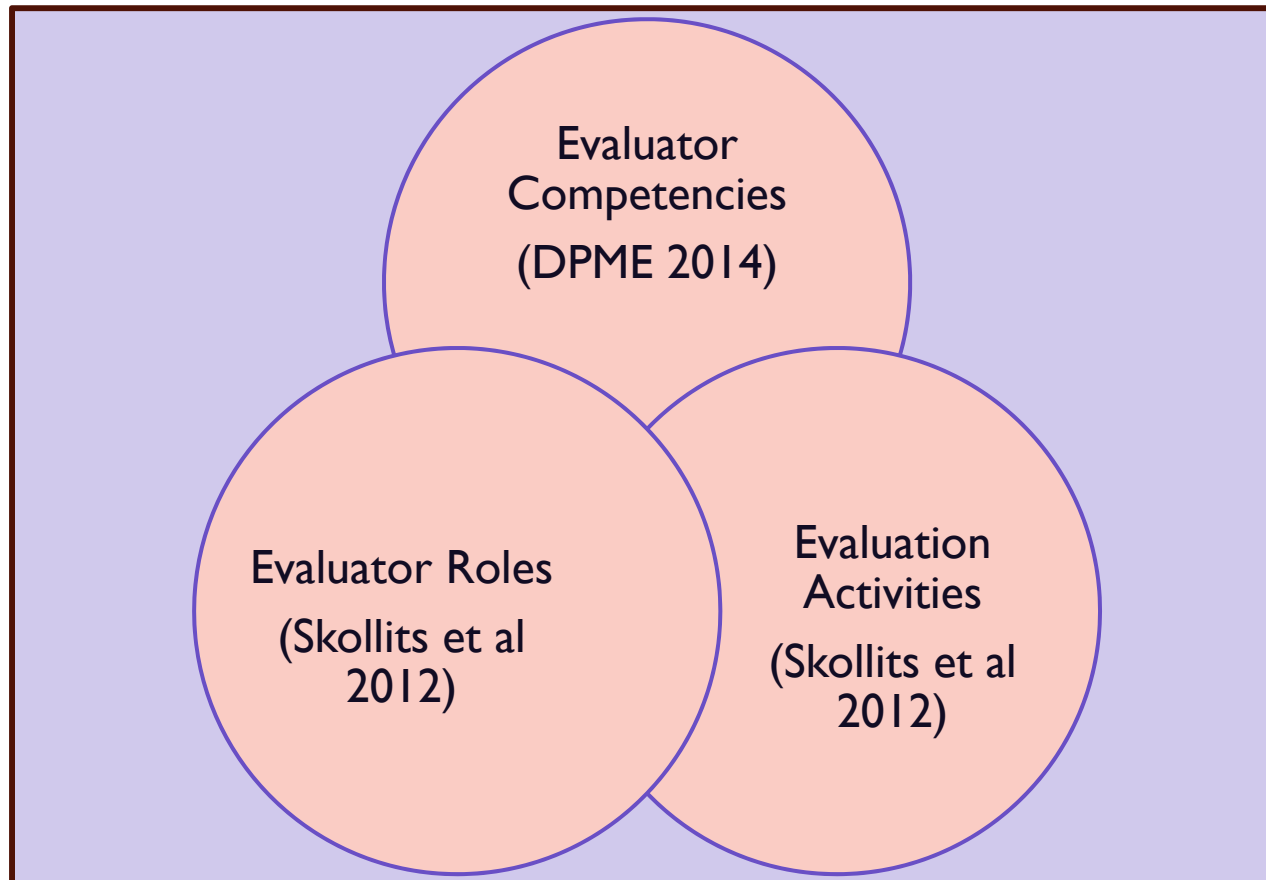
Step 3: Involvement in complex evaluation



- Being appointed in an M&E Organisation and University Department that teaches M&E

The course work and Evaluation report prepared me to some extent for what I was to encounter in the real world but I am finding that there are some things one cannot be taught in the classroom that are essential to an evaluator





Evaluation Activities



1. Preparation to serve as evaluator (management) – includes putting together team, getting resources and budgeting
2. Initiating Contact – understanding the evaluand
3. Planning Evaluation– coming up with detailed evaluation plan
4. Evaluation Contracting – negotiating with client on deliverables & time tables
5. Implementation – beginning of implementation including stakeholder engagement
6. Collecting/ Analysing Data – collection & analysis of data
7. Making Judgment – making a judgment, recommendations
8. Reporting – sharing results with client and stakeholders
9. Using Results – advocating for evaluation findings and recommendations
10. Reflecting – reflect on experience to improve knowledge & practice

SOURCE: Skolits et al. (2012). Focusing, Situating and Grounding Micro Level Evaluation Field Experiences: An Instructional Tool. *American Journal of Evaluation*. 33, 124-156





1. Detective (clarificator) – gathers information about the programme and evaluability of programme
2. Designer – puts together the evaluation plan
3. Negotiator – negotiates to reach agreement with client
4. Diplomat (mediator) – engages with different stakeholders of the programme
5. Researcher – collects and analyses data using appropriate methods
6. Judge – makes decision about programme based on evidence
7. Reporter – shares results with various stakeholders
8. Advocate – promotes use of evaluation findings
9. Learner – reflects on experience & learns from that
10. Manager – manages various aspects of the evaluation e.g. personnel, resources, relationships. Like the diplomat this role can be played throughout the evaluation

SOURCE: Skolits et al. (2012). Focusing, Situating and Grounding Micro Level Evaluation Field Experiences: An Instructional Tool. *American Journal of Evaluation*. 33, 124-156





As categorised by the DPME (2014), evaluator competencies fall within 4 competency dimensions:

- ◆ Overarching considerations – including contextual knowledge & interpersonal skills
- ◆ Leadership – skills of evaluation leaders e.g. managers
- ◆ Evaluation craft – includes evaluative discipline and research practice
- ◆ Implementation of evaluation – covers planning & management as well as reporting & improvement

SOURCE: Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. (2014).

Available at

<http://www.thepresidencydpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/evaluationsSite/Pages/Competencies.aspx>. Accessed 15 June 2015



Self-assessment framework



Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
1. Initiating Contact	Detective (Clarificator)	Interpersonal skills			
2. Planning Evaluation	Designer	Evaluation planning			
3. Implementation	Diplomat (Mediation)	Interpersonal skills			
4. Collecting / Analysing Data	Researcher	Research Practice			
5. Making Judgment	Judge	Evaluative Discipline & Practice + contextual knowledge & understanding			
6. Reporting	Reporter	Report writing & communications			
7. Using Results	Advocate	Evaluation Use			
9. Reflecting	Learner	Evaluative discipline & practice			
10. Management	Manager	Managing Evaluation			

Key:
N = Novice
C = Competent
E = Expert





Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
1. Initiating Contact	Detective (Clarificator)	Interpersonal skills			
2. Planning Evaluation	Designer	Evaluation planning			

Key: N = Novice
 C = Competent
 E = Expert

Rationale for assessment:

- ◆ Past work experience contributed to interpersonal skills
- ◆ Competency in resource management & planning from past work



Initial initiation and data collection



Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
3.Implementation	Diplomat (Mediator)	Interpersonal skills			
4. Collecting / Analysing Data	Researcher	Research Practice			

Rationale for Assessment:

- ◆ Interpersonal skills were from previous work experience e.g. communication, negotiation, facilitation
- ◆ Some competency in qualitative data analysis taught in M&E course. I did not have competency in quantitative data analysis & I am learning these in current evaluation



Being Evaluative - Judgment continued



Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
5. Making Judgment	Judge	Evaluative Discipline & Practice + contextual knowledge & understanding			

Rationale for assessment:

- ◆ Moderate sector specific knowledge based on past work experience but current evaluation, I had very little knowledge – learning as I go
- ◆ I had some cultural competency e.g. language, the culture of the community and this was meager with current evaluation that has multi-sites
- ◆ Recommendations based on literature mostly & not past experience with other similar projects or programs





Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
6. Reporting	Reporter	Report writing & communications			
7. Using Results	Advocate	Evaluation Use			

Rationale for Assessment:

- ◆ Reporter competency from the course & past work experience
- ◆ Advocate for use I had some competency from the course & incorporated that in the clarificatory evaluation





Activity	Role	Competencies	Level		
			N	C	E
9. Reflecting	Learner	Evaluative discipline & practice			
10. Management	Manager	Managing Evaluation			

Rationale for Assessment:

- ◆ I had some knowledge from the course but the art of stepping away from the data and finding interesting patterns and emerging themes I have found comes with practice
- ◆ I had competency from previous work experience but I had a naïve assumption that I would not be affected by project management issues – yet I find management is required through-out



Now that I am part of more complex evaluations...



- ◆ Awareness of how the organisational context of the evaluand affects my work as an evaluator.
- ◆ Awareness of self as part of the context
- ◆ Playing the advocate role where the perception of evaluators as inspectors are still prevailing among stakeholders— requiring negotiating and diplomacy throughout evaluation
- ◆ As I moved to bigger evaluation, there is more data (more cleaning (which is affected by the data capturer as well and his or her context) & higher demand on competency
- ◆ The importance of on-going self-reflection





“Evaluation involves ongoing learning. The practice of evaluation builds on science and theory, but is ultimately a craft that is shaped by experience and expertise, and conditioned by the specific context of an evaluation.” (Rog 2015: 235)

- ◆ The emerging evaluator has to be open to constant learning and unlearning – from literature, from peers and from experts and from experience
- ◆ The emerging evaluator comes with some competency and some of that competency proves useful to evaluation assignments
- ◆ It is a big step from the course evaluation report to a bigger evaluation but the preparation in the course and the course evaluation report cannot be discounted
- ◆ We ‘practice’ evaluation – evaluation is a practice



The emerging evaluator needs a mentor



Just as Jennifer Greene reflected on her journey of learning as a novice from Guba, emerging evaluators are likely to do better with the mentorship of an expert.

