

Managing to Outcomes in an Era of Scarcity

Agency Meeting
June 28, 2016

United Way of Northwest Arkansas

LIVE UNITED

**United
Way**



Uniting Together

- Welcome Melody Timinsky
- Structure & Purpose of Meetings
- *Managing to Outcomes in an Era of Scarcity* Dr. Kim Aaron
- Agency Updates Community Impact Team
 - Kim Johnson
 - Holly Sparks Hill
- Closing Melody Timinsky

Structure and Purpose of Meetings

- Bi-monthly meetings for organizations interested in working together to create pathways out of poverty
- Expand agencies' organizational capacity and provide a network of support resources
- Share best practices through participation in a learning community

Upcoming Meeting Topics

August 23, 2016

Using Data: Join the Solution Research Findings

October 25, 2016

Evaluating for Outcomes: Mission Possible

December 20, 2016

Making Theory of Change a Practical Reality

February 22, 2017

The Power of Collaborating

April 19, 2017

Bringing the Board Along

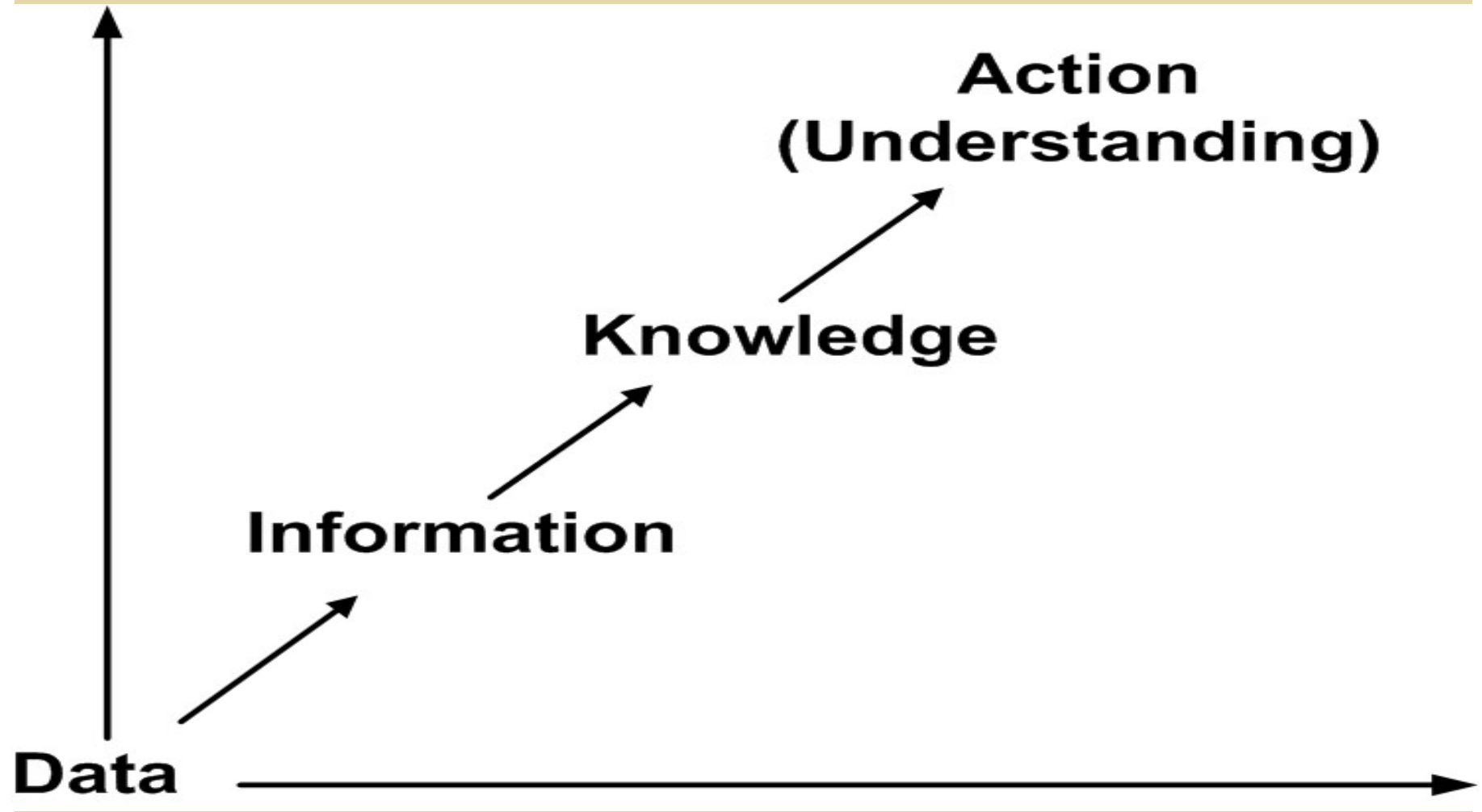
Managing to Outcomes in an Era of Scarcity

Dr. Kim Aaron

Focus for Today

- Data
- Information
- Outcomes
- Program Evaluation
- Strategy

From Data to Action



Data vs. Information

- **Data** represents a fact or statement of event without relation to other things
 - It can exist in any form, usable or not. It does not have meaning of itself – it simply exists
 - *Example: It is raining.*
- **Information** is data that has been given meaning by way of a relational connection.
 - Information embodies the understanding of a relationship of some sort, such as cause and effect
 - *Example: The temperature dropped 15 degrees and then it started raining.*

Knowledge & Understanding

- **Knowledge** is the appropriate collection of information, such that its intent is to be useful
 - Knowledge represents a pattern that connects and generally provides a high level of predictability as to what is described or what will happen next
 - *Example: If humidity is high and the temperature drops, the atmosphere is often unlikely to hold moisture, so it rains.*
- **Understanding** is the process by which knowledge can be taken and synthesized into useful actions based on what was previously known and understood
 - Builds on currently held information, knowledge and understanding
 - *Example: It rains because it rains. And this encompasses an understanding of all the interactions that happen between raining, evaporation, air currents and temperature changes.*

Evaluation in Practice

- As a table, conduct an evaluation of chocolate chip cookies.
- Each table has samples of four (4) different kinds/brands of cookies. You will need to evaluate the cookies to determine which is the best.
- You will need to determine the evaluation questions, criteria, method of data collection and rating, based on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest.
- You will have 20 minutes to complete your evaluation.

Bias in Data Collection and Decision- Making

- Types of biases
 - › 100+
 - › Some “favorites”
 - Backfire effect
 - Bandwagon effect
 - Confirmation
 - Expectation
 - Framing
 - Fundamental Attribution Error
 - Observation selection
 - Texas sharpshooter fallacy

Other Caveats

“Analysis paralysis” refers to over-analyzing (or over-thinking) a situation so that a decision or action is never taken, in effect paralyzing the outcome.

Satisficing/Bounded Rationality is the principle that in most cases people and organizations seek to obtain a satisfactory solution, not necessarily the optimum one.

“Jumping to conclusions” is when we make an assumption and accept that it is true without acknowledging that we are indeed making an assumption.

Types of Information

Description

- Report of account of an experience or observation

Inference

- Conclusion derived from beliefs or what are thought to be facts

Attribution

- Ascribed, inferred or assumed cause or characteristic

Evaluation

- Determination or judgment

Ladder of Inference

We all make inferences about what is happening to us and how we make decisions based on those inferences

Starting with **data/facts**, we then **select additional data** based on our past experiences, beliefs, values, etc. *Note that we can overlook anything that doesn't match our beliefs.*

We then **affix or assign meaning** to what we have selected, and develop **assumptions**.

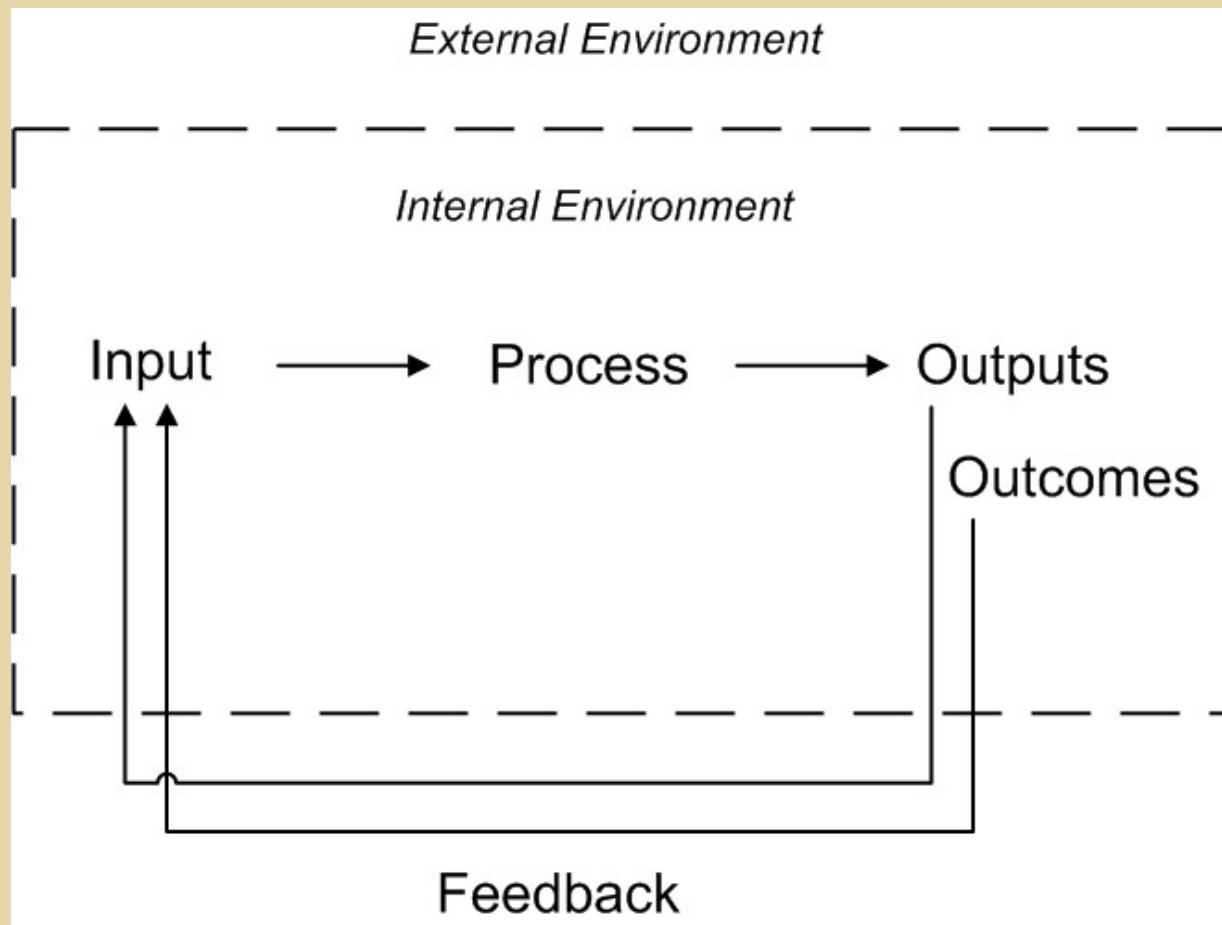
These assumptions become the basis of our **conclusions**.

We finally **develop or reinforce beliefs** based on those conclusions, and it is these beliefs which then form the basis for **actions**.

Actions then create a new set of data & experience.



Feedback Loop to Strategy



Methods of Data Collection

- Documentation review
- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Checklists
- Open-ended interviews
- Semi-structured interviews
- Structured interviews
- Observation
- Focus groups
- Case studies

Key Questions to Consider

Do I know enough to make a decision?

Do I need more data?

What else do I need to consider?

What are my assumptions?

What is the best/worst outcome if I make a decision now, even if other data may be available later?

Agency Updates

- Agency Agreements
- Fill the Bus
- 2-1-1
- EFSP

Kim Johnson

Holly Sparks Hill