

## Handout 1: Ideas and Sources for Measuring

### Common Metrics Used to Measure Regional Economic Change

#### Business:

- Individual business profit
- Job expansion/retention
- Tax base
- Consumer spending

#### Education:

- K-12 test scores
- SAT scores
- Graduation rates
- Educational attainment

#### Employment:

- Unemployment rates
- Average age of workforce participants
- Percent self-employed
- Average wage and salary
- Average self-employed income
- Commuting time
- Clusters

#### Housing:

- Number of units
- Homeownership rate
- Building permits
- Average building permit value

#### Income:

- Median household income
- Average wage and salary
- Average self-employed income
- Poverty rate
- Cost of living

## Common Methods for Measuring

### Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills

- **Pre/post survey:** A few key questions related to attitudes or knowledge can help you quickly assess a participant's change in these two areas.
- **Skill assessment/demonstration:** When teaching a skill, having participants demonstrate the skill is a great way to see if they have successfully mastered it.
- **Practical application exercise:** Applying key concepts or skills to a practical exercise is another way to check understanding.
- **Willingness to participate in follow-up activities:** Sometimes a participant's willingness to participate in follow-up activities can be an important gauge. For instance, if you conduct an introductory session on an important topic, and participants sign up for the follow-up session, you have some indication of interest. This could be an indirect way to determine that the information you presented in your initial session was effective.

### Behaviors:

- **Logging behaviors:** This works well for participants who will be part of a program for an extended period of time. You can provide a way for them to monitor a specific behavior, such as using a log or tally worksheet.
- **Monitoring completion of follow-up activities:** Similar to logging behaviors, this method provides participants with a list of activities to complete along the way. Periodic checks with the participants can let you know whether or not your strategy is leading to the behavior you are seeking.
- **Follow-up surveys:** We've all received a survey in the mail or in our inbox asking for input after an event or experience of some kind. These can be useful tools for finding out if the strategy you selected is leading to change.
- **Observation:** Sometimes observation is a good behavior measurement tool. Suppose your regional strategy involved helping participants identify five important changes they each need to make to their business websites. A quick click of a mouse could tell you in a matter of minutes whether or not the participants went back to their shops and put the learning into behavior.

### Conditions:

- **Secondary data:** Secondary data are those that already exist, such as Census data or data generated by various local and state agencies. In some cases, these types of data can, by themselves, offer you a way to measure changes in conditions (such as increases in the number of people employed or improvements in local sales tax collections). A word of caution, though, is to make sure you are looking at data realistically tied to your strategy.
- **Follow up with participants:** Using surveys, focus groups or interviews, you can check back with participants from time to time to see how conditions related to your strategies have changed.



**Handout 3: Measurement Plan Example: Web Design Course for Small Business Owners**

<b>What you want to measure</b>	<b>What information you need</b>	<b>Who has the information</b>	<b>How you will get the information</b>	<b>How often/when you will get the information</b>
<p><i>Your Strategy:</i> Web Design Course</p> <p><i>Class Participants:</i> Targeting small business owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of classes held, length of classes</li> <li>• Number of participants</li> <li>• Business status (current business owners, potential entrepreneurs, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Instructors</p> <p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask instructors to turn in participant logs</li> <li>• Ask basic question(s) about business status on registration form</li> </ul>	<p>Ask instructors to turn in logs within two weeks of completing the training</p>
<p><i>Attitudes/Knowledge/Skills</i></p> <p>Participants become more interested in establishing a website for their business</p>	<p>Change in participants' learning/attitudes</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>Post survey asking participants to indicate interest in Web presence before the training vs. after</p>	<p>At the end of every training class</p>
<p><i>Behavior</i></p> <p>Participants will launch a website for their business</p>	<p>How many participants launched a website</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>Trainers will follow up with participants to check on progress and offer technical assistance (additional strategy)</p>	<p>3 months after training</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>1 year</p>
<p><i>Condition</i></p> <p>Participants that launch a website for their business will see revenue growth</p>	<p>Business revenue growth</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>Trainers will survey participants to ask about growth. (Google analytics introduced as part of the training.)</p>	<p>Annually</p>