

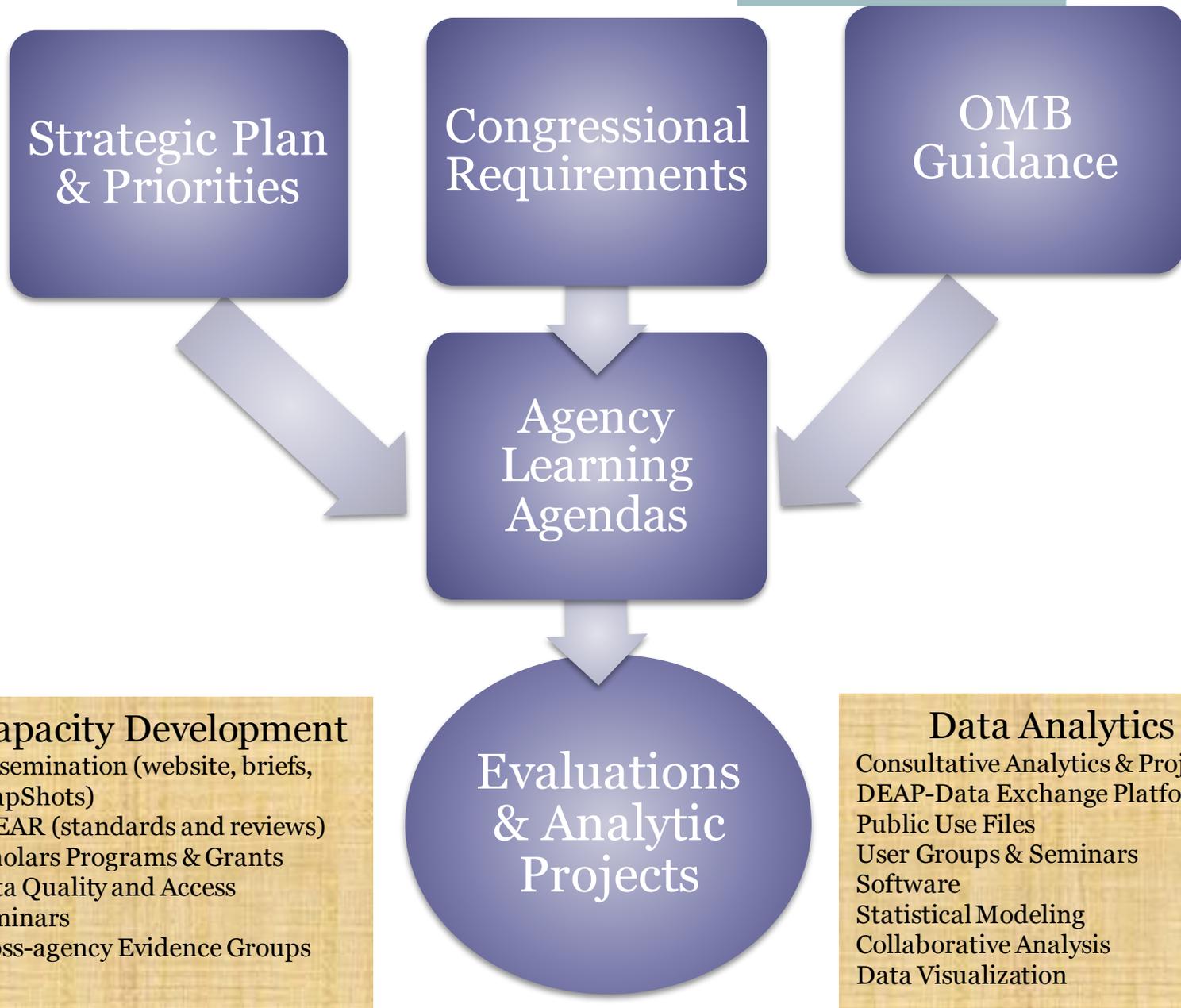
Evidence-based Policy: A Federal Evaluation Office's Perspective

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DOL Mission

- “...foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights”
 - Over a dozen operating agencies, each with subagencies, many programs, and field offices
 - Worker protection and labor standards
 - Employment services, job training, and worker security
 - Policy and advocacy
 - Many have research, analysis, and/or evaluation offices
- CEO’s Departmental-level evaluation support-
 - Complements not duplicates agency evaluation functions
 - Raises the quality of evaluations and awareness and knowledge of evaluation methodology and standards
 - Improves use and dissemination of evaluation results
 - Improves access to, quality of, and use of data, including the CEO Data Analytics Unit (coordinate with BLS, Performance Management Center, and agencies)



Main Types of Evaluations

- **Formal evaluations**
 - Experimental design—random assignment treatment and control groups (especially formal net impact evaluations, rapid cycle behavioral tests)
 - Quasi-experimental designs—created comparison groups (statistical matching techniques)
 - Various analytic levels: nation, states, localities, grantees; programs, demonstrations, strategies, models
- **Outcome evaluations**
 - Nonexperimental statistical/econometric modeling
 - Survey analysis
 - Statistical analysis of BLS and Census data
- **Program performance analysis**
 - Quantitative output and outcome analysis
- **Implementation and management evaluations**
 - Organizational and program process analysis

Priority Data Issues for Evaluations

- Appropriate outcome variables
 - (e.g., individual workers, program participants, firms, establishments, states)
- Appropriate independent variables, covariates
 - (e.g., labor market conditions, demographic and household characteristics, work and earnings history, education, criminal record, occupation/industry, compliance history)
- Time frame aligned to evaluation goals—pre and post periods
- Micro-level data
- Longitudinal features
- Agile merging
 - Longitudinal analysis files
 - Using unique identifiers (e.g., individuals, firms, establishments, states, programs, grantees)
 - Linking other evaluation data collected (e.g., surveys, program data)

Priority data systems issues for evaluations

- Analysts' access to the physical data infrastructure (e.g., by third-party researchers, federal staff analysts)
- Expert human capital (e.g., data and programming expertise)
- Timeliness of access
- Security (e.g., secure PII, informed consent usage)
- Cost efficient

Priority interests (“wish list”) to improve data for DOL evaluations

- *Earnings data.* Direct, and less costly, access to earnings records produced by DOL’s state employment security agency partners—for evaluation, statistical products, and program performance measurement
 - National Directory of New Hires
 - Longitudinal Employer and Household Dynamics
- *Firm identifiers.* Common firm, employer, and establishment identification scheme
- *Reformed PRA.* Streamlined and less costly Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) process for evaluations and evidence-building
- *Streamlined IAA.* Less cumbersome interagency agreement (IAA) process to facilitate and encourage cross-agency data sharing and matching at the Federal level
- *Privacy & Security.* More clarity and consistency in procedures and rules among Federal agencies and other data providers

For more information...

- Demetra Nightingale
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- CEO website (including DOL Evaluation Policy Statement)
<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/EvaluationPolicy.htm>
- CLEAR (DOL's evidence-based clearinghouse)
<http://clear.dol.gov/>