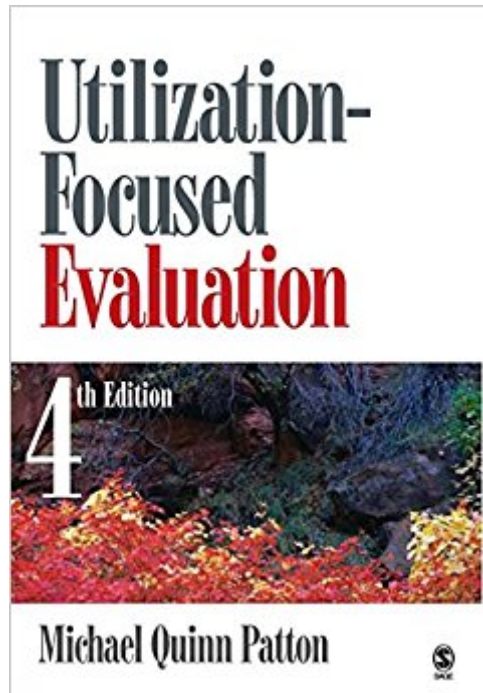




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# Utilization-Focused Evaluation



## Synopsis

The Fourth Edition of the bestselling *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* provides expert, detailed advice on conducting program evaluations from one of leading experts. Chock full of useful pedagogy—including a unique utilization-focused evaluation checklist—this book presents Michael Quinn Patton's distinctive opinions based on more than thirty years of experience. Key Features of the Fourth Edition Provides thoroughly updated materials including more international content; new references; new exhibits and sidebars; and new examples, stories, and cartoons Includes follow-up exercises at the end of each chapter Features a utilization-focused evaluation checklist Gives greater emphasis on mixed methods Analyzes the pluses and minuses of the increased emphasis on accountability and performance measurement in government at all levels Details the explosion of international evaluation Intended Audience Both theoretical and practical, this core text is an essential resource for students enrolled in Program Evaluation courses in a variety of disciplines—including public administration, government, social sciences, education, and management. Practitioners will also find this text invaluable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michael Quinn Patton is an independent consultant with more than 40 years' experience conducting applied research and program evaluations. He lives in Minnesota, where, according to the state's poet laureate, Garrison Keillor, "all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average." It was this interesting lack of

statistical variation in Minnesota that led him to qualitative inquiry despite the strong quantitative orientation of his doctoral studies in sociology at the University of Wisconsin. He was on the faculty of the University of Minnesota for 18 years, including 5 years as director of the Minnesota Center for Social Research, where he was awarded the Morse-Amoco Award for innovative teaching. Readers of this book will not be surprised to learn that he has also won the University of Minnesota storytelling competition. He has authored six other SAGE books: *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, *Creative Evaluation*, *Practical Evaluation*, *How to Use Qualitative Methods for Evaluation*, *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, and *Family Sexual Abuse: Frontline Research and Evaluation*. He has edited or contributed articles to numerous books and journals, including several volumes of *New Directions in Program Evaluation*, on subjects as diverse as culture and evaluation, how and why language matters, HIV/AIDS research and evaluation systems, extension methods, feminist evaluation, teaching using the case method, evaluating strategy, utilization of evaluation, and valuing. He is the author of *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use* and coauthor of *Getting to Maybe: How the World Is Changed*, a book that applies complexity science to social innovation. His creative nonfiction book, *Grand Canyon Celebration: A Father-Son Journey of Discovery*, was a finalist for Minnesota Book of the Year. He is a former president of the American Evaluation Association and recipient of both the Alva and Gunnar Myrdal Award for Outstanding Contributions to Useful and Practical Evaluation and the Paul F. Lazarsfeld Award for Lifelong Contributions to Evaluation Theory from the American Evaluation Association. The Society for Applied Sociology presented him the Lester F. Ward Award for Outstanding Contributions to Applied Sociology. He is on the faculty of The Evaluators' Institute and teaches workshops for the American Evaluation Association's professional development courses and Claremont University's Summer Institute. He is a founding trainer for the International Program for Development Evaluation Training, sponsored by The World Bank and other international development agencies each summer in Ottawa, Ontario. He has conducted applied research and evaluation on a broad range of issues, including antipoverty initiatives, leadership development, education at all levels, human services, the environment, public health, medical education, employment training, agricultural extension, arts, criminal justice, mental health, transportation, diversity initiatives, international development, community development, systems change, policy effectiveness, managing for results, performance indicators, and effective governance. He has worked with organizations and programs at the international, national, state, provincial, and local levels and with philanthropic, not-for-profit, private sector, international agency, and government programs. He has worked with people from many different cultures and

perspectives. He has three children – a musician, an engineer, and a nonprofit organization development and evaluation specialist – and one granddaughter. When not evaluating, he enjoys exploring the woods and rivers of Minnesota with his partner, Jean – kayaking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing – and occasionally hiking in the Grand Canyon. He enjoys watching the seasons change from his office overlooking the Mississippi River in Saint

Very interesting to read - which is weird because it's an academic book. I really enjoyed playing around with the theories and perspectives presented in the book.

The U-FE framework is primarily a text about user focused evaluation. I have found this text to be both useful and comforting. The usefulness of the book begins with taking a novice evaluator, I am one, through some very basic activities to help build evaluation skills of professionals. Patton starts with the rationale the many evaluations are unused. Then he builds his case for use throughout the entire text. He continues to develop the strengths and weaknesses of goal based and goal free evaluation. Ultimately he states that evaluations need to have use for primary users and that evaluations need to measure client outcomes. Did the program actually change, maintain, prevent something in the target population. There are few books in any profession that admit working with human based systems is very difficult. Patton lays out the highly complex feelings and emotions that an evaluator deals with at any point in the evaluation process. I know as a teacher that sometimes our profession misses that we have a tremendous impact on students. I know that it is a platitude. Evaluation is a relatively new field with few institutions currently offering degrees in evaluation, so Patton offers a lot of insight into this highly complex and still developing field. There are some very practical menus offered in the text as well. Approaching any consulting work with a list of viable and workable choices is a good thing. I find that understanding the choices helps me to focus on what is right for the primary users of the evaluation. Focusing on the primary intended users is good business. Not only is it good business, but I believe that working in challenging situations it is good to allow people to decide what course to take. Many criticize this approach for being too close to the program being evaluated, and I disagree with this notion. There is little evidence in my experience or in the literature to suggest that any interaction with human systems can be objective. People are smart and keeping a distance may add unintended consequences to any evaluation. Patton is suggesting working with intended users to increase evaluation use. Evaluation that are completed and never used is a waste of time and resources. I find Patton's book helpful in keeping my interest in evaluation because I do want to be part of a world that I can help make better.

Of course a great classic book in the perspective of the outcomes evaluation users. Great to Portugal, a kantian country, where theory is a sacred god and where practice is the evil. It is a pity no one till now to assume a translation from english to portuguese...

Overall the book provides an excellent overview of the different evaluation methods as well as offering significant tips on helping both internal and external program evaluators. The book is ideal for graduate students as well as evaluators just entering the field. In addition, it provides non-profit evaluation departments with an excellent foundation on developing more effective internal quality improvement units within their own organizations.

This book on Evaluation of public programs is one of the most advanced books that are available in the market currently. However, the approach of this book, as the title suggests, is practice oriented. So this is a good book not only for class room teaching but also for self learning processes as well. We are using this book for the Evaluation course that I am currently studying for my Doctoral program.

As far as the content goes, it's dry and frankly uninteresting. However, the textbook serves it's purpose and I received it in great condition in a timely manner. :)

I don't like the book

Excellent book for evaluators as well as for clients of evaluation processes.

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