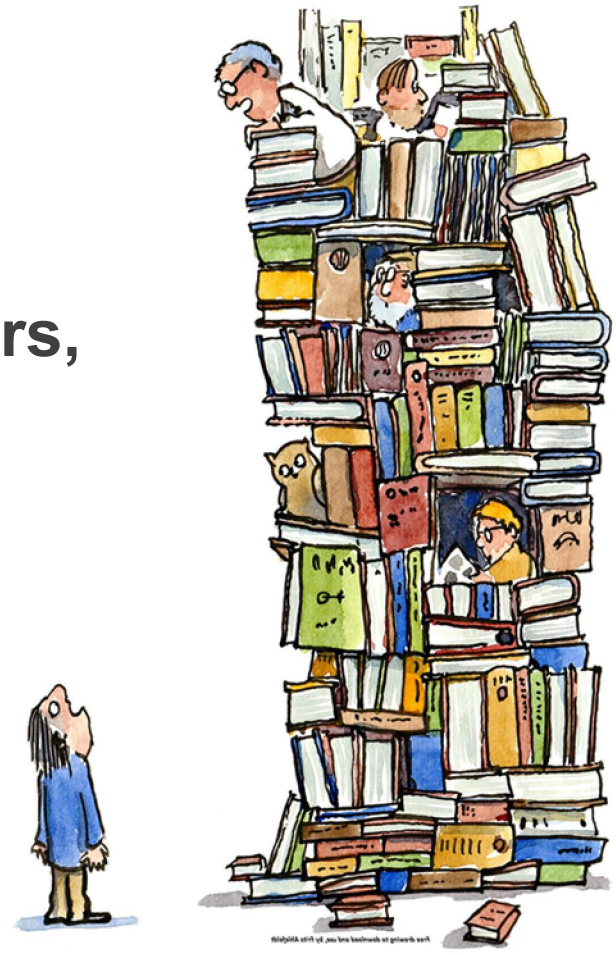
Leaping from the Ivory Tower and Landing on Firm Ground:

How active collaboration between academics, evaluators, implementers, and program managers can create effective and scalable behavior programs

Jane S. Peters, Ph.D.
Meghan Bean, Ph.D.
Alexandra Dunn, Ph.D.



Our Perspective

Provide assistance to program administrators seeking to integrate behavior into programs

Serve as evaluator for a program administrator funding behavior pilots

Many years of traditional program evaluation experience

Provide assistance to implementation firms seeking to integrate behavior into programs

Dissertation & graduate school experience with academic research projects

Experience designing and conducting behavior research studies

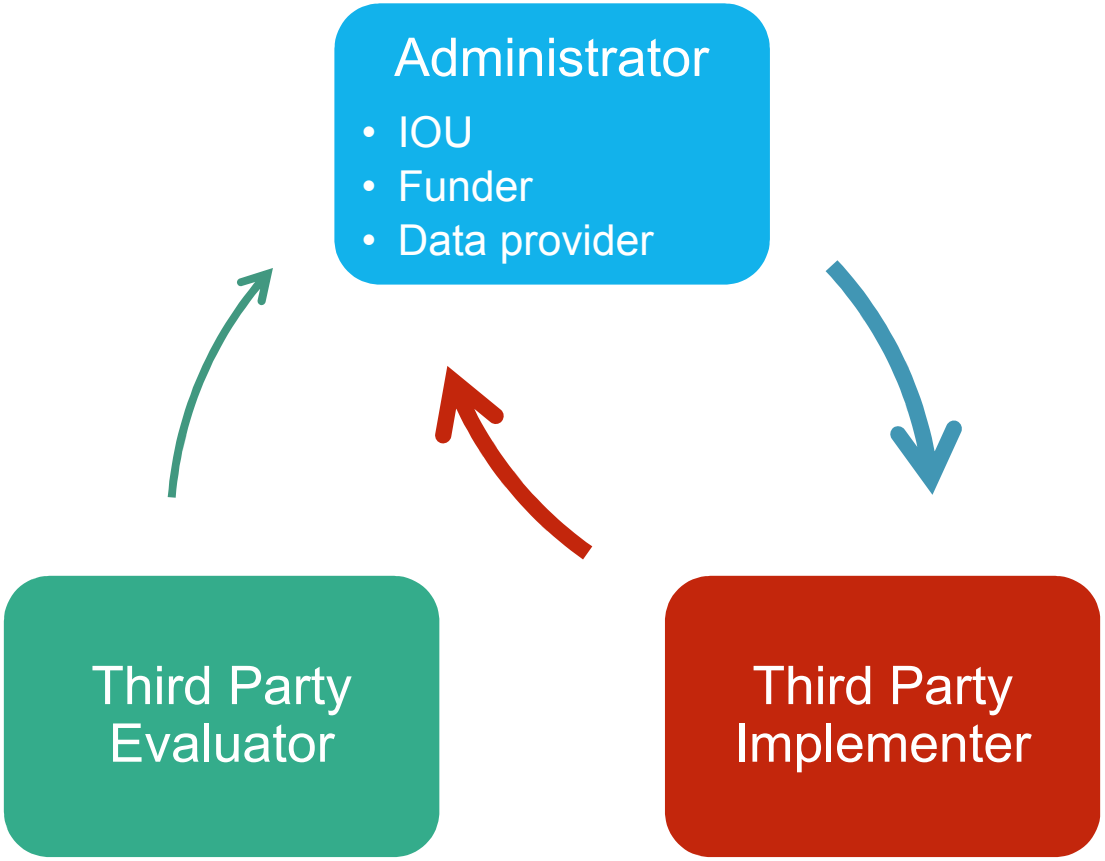
The Current Landscape of Behavior Programs

1,374 Rebate or loan programs in U.S.

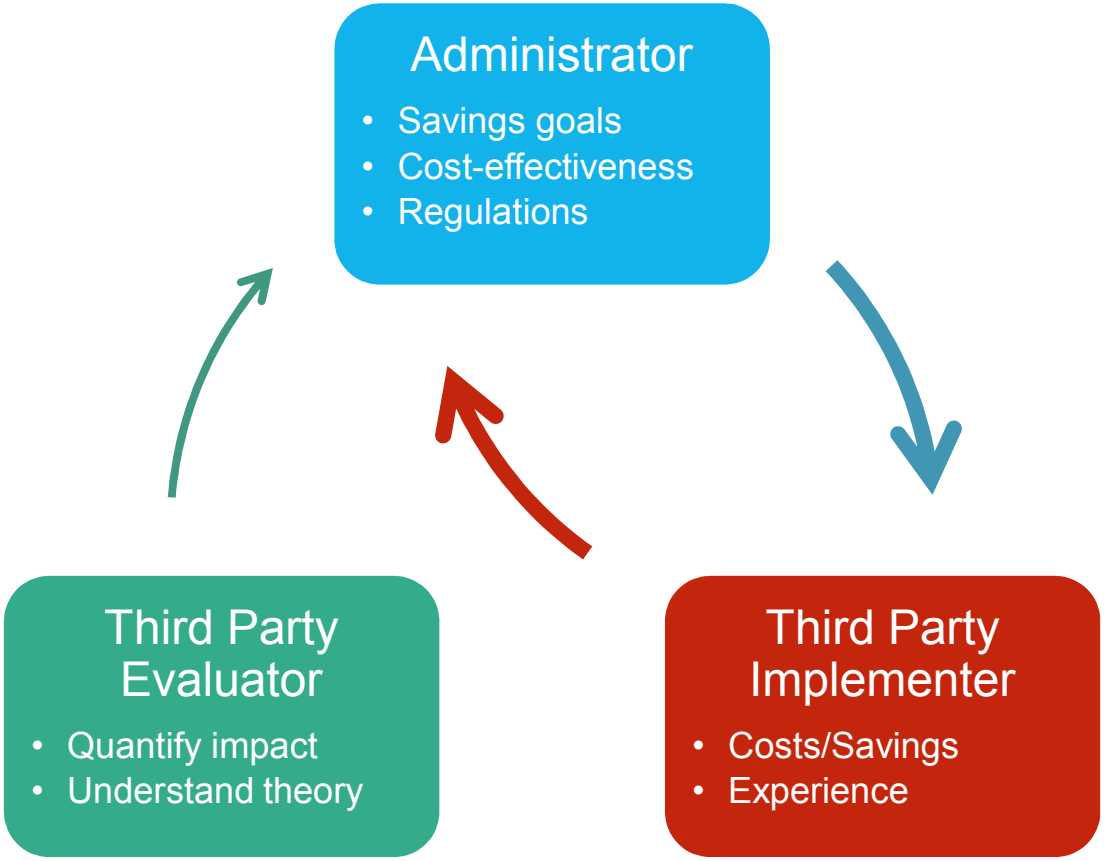
238 Behavior programs in North America

- ➔ Most rely on periodic feedback and social comparison
- ➔ Many do not claim savings

Communication in Traditional Program Design



Player Priorities in Traditional Program Design



Traditional Programs vs. Behavior Programs

	Traditional Programs	Behavior Programs
Widget-based savings	☑	☒
Social and behavioral science theories	☒	☑
Experimental or quasi-experimental design	☒	☑

Academic vs. Implementer Designed Programs

Who designed the program...	Pros	Cons
Implementers or IOUs	• High industry understanding • Positive customer experience	• Limited incorporation of behavioral theory • Sometimes difficult to evaluate
Academics	• Incorporation of behavioral theory • Well-executed experimental design	• Hard to implement • Small effect size • Not scalable • Conflicting goals

Evaluator's Role

Traditional Programs

- Evaluate process/impact
- Usually looking backward
- Recommend changes for next implementation

Behavior Programs

- Assess whether design is evaluable
- Review pilot content
- Assess threats to validity
- Conduct power analyses
- Provide assistance during implementation

Opportunities

- Integrate evaluators early in the program design phase
- Evaluators are uniquely situated due to their expertise in
  - experimental design
  - which interventions effectively reduce energy use and under what conditions
  - the energy efficiency industry and IOU constraints
- Use an iterative approach to designing behavior pilots

Three major components of any behavior pilot

Starting with a target population

University students in sub-metered dorms

Starting with a target intervention

Endorsement from a trusted messenger

Starting with a target behavior to change

Select a green energy provider

Three major components of any behavior pilot

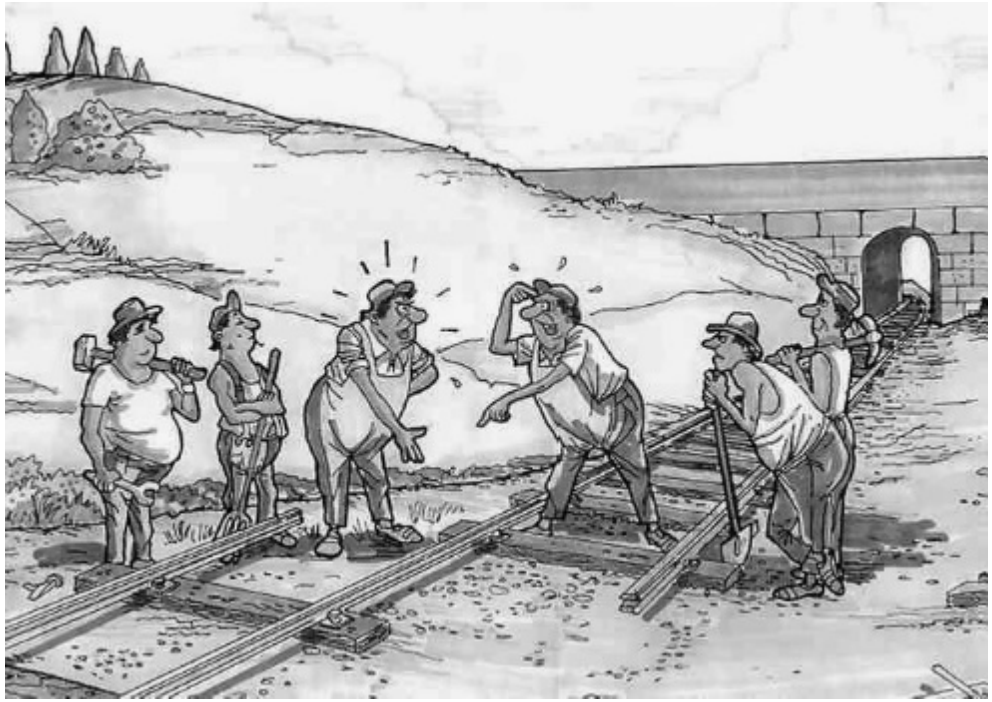
Start anywhere...

but go full circle!

Implementation in an applied setting

When implementing pilots in the real world...

- Problems will arise
- Course corrections will have to be made



Opportunities:

- Keep all parties involved in and aware of implementation issues
- Agree upon alternatives prior to implementation

Summary

research into action inc

Contact:

jane.peters@researchintoaction.com

meghan.bean@researchintoaction.com

alex.dunn@researchintoaction.com