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

Administrator
- IOU
- Funder
- Data provider

Third Party Evaluator

Third Party Implementer
Player Priorities in Traditional Program Design

Administrator
- Savings goals
- Cost-effectiveness
- Regulations

Third Party Evaluator
- Quantify impact
- Understand theory

Third Party Implementer
- Costs/Savings
- Experience
# Traditional Programs vs. Behavior Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional Programs</th>
<th>Behavior Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Widget-based savings</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and behavioral science theories</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental or quasi-experimental design</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
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## Academic vs. Implementer Designed Programs

<table>
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<th>Who designed the program...</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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| 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

Target Intervention

Target Population

Target Behavior to Change
Starting with a target population

University students in sub-metered dorms

Target Intervention

Target Population

Target Behavior to Change
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!

Target Intervention

Target Population

Target Behavior to Change
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
Contact:

jane.peters@researchintoaction.com
meghan.bean@researchintoaction.com
alex.dunn@researchintoaction.com