

# Policy Analysis and Decision-Making

with Emphasis on Chronic Non-communicable Diseases

**Bridgetown, Barbados**

**October 15-17, 2007**

## Products of the Analysis

Cristina Puentes-Markides  
Health Policies and Systems  
Strategic Health Development Area  
PAHO/WHO

## Key points

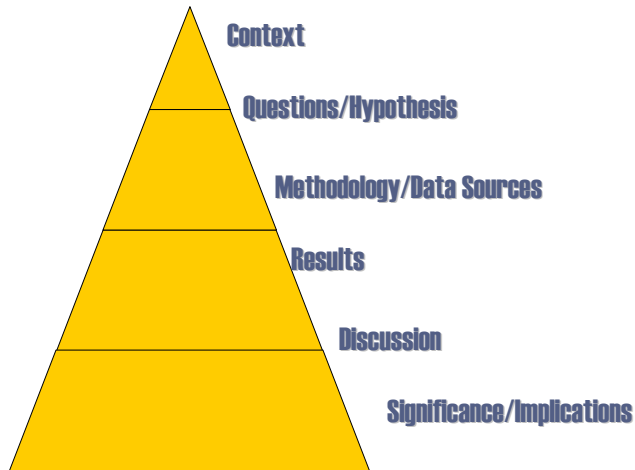
- Products of the Analysis
- Ethics and values in public policy
- Evidentiary bases of public policy: opportunities and risks.
- The craft of policy advice
- Role and competencies of the analyst

## Products of the Analysis

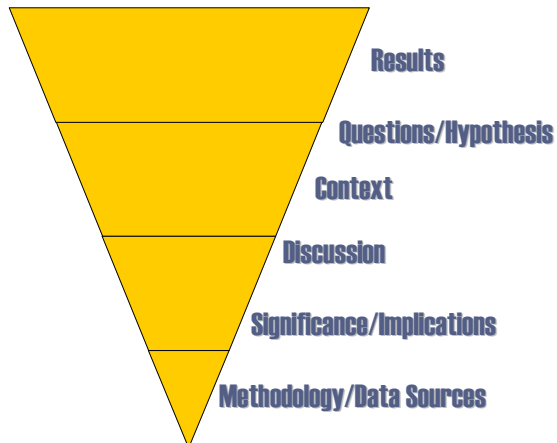
## Products of Policy Analysis

- **Policy Analysis (requested)**
  - Memorandum on a narrowly defined problem usually prepared by a review of existing data.
- **Policy Research** (not necessarily requested or targeted)
  - Report prepared examining a broad problem.
- **Applied social science research**
  - Scholarly assessment of a policy and its affects.
  - Often from a “think tank” or academia.

# Writing for Researchers



# Writing for Policymakers



## Some suggestions

**Avoid jargon and convert to some meaningful talk**

Sorian, Richard. How to Get Through. *Writing for Policymakers*. Presented to Association for Health Services Research and Health Policy, June 24, 2002

Instead of	Use
Individuals	People
Males	Men
Females	Women
Minors	Children
Impact (v)	Affect
Incentivize	Encourage
Localities	States, cities, towns
Resources	Money (usually)
Hypotheses	Questions
Outcomes	Results
Morbidity	Illness
Mortality	Death
Interventions	Actions
Variables	Factors
Covered Lives	Insured people

## Basic and Applied Policy Analysis\*

### Characteristic

### Basic

### Applied

Origin of Problem/Opportunity	Literature (theory); peers	Government clients/public
Typical Methods	Quantitative Modelling	Development of Sound Argument
Type of Research	Original Data Collection	Synthesis/Evaluation of Existing Data
Primary Aim	Improve Theory	Improve Practice
Dissemination	Referred Article/Book	Briefing Note; Issue Paper; Memo to Cabinet; Policy Statement; Green Paper; White Paper


	<b>Type of Policy Paper</b>		
<b>Areas of Difference</b>	<b>Policy Study (Issue Paper)</b>	<b>Policy Brief</b>	<b>Policy Memo</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Targets other policy specialists (may not have been requested by a decision-maker)	Targets decision-makers	Targets a broad audience of stakeholders
<b>Focus</b>	Issue driven: broad recommendations and analysis of policy issues	Audience driven-Specific policy message designed to convince key stakeholders.	Audience Driven: Specific policy message designed to convince key stakeholders
<b>Context of Use</b>	Dissemination and debate on results of policy research, informs the policy brief.	Used for advocating and lobbying purposes.	Used for advocacy and lobbying and to encourage stakeholders to read further
<b>Methodology</b>	Can include much primary research.	Rarely includes primary research.	Rarely includes primary research.
<b>Ideas/Language Used</b>	Can be quite discipline specific/technical	Must be very clear and simple.	Must be very clear and simple.
<b>Length</b>	Up to 60 pages.	Between 6-15 pages.	Up to four pages.

Source: <http://www.bos.org.yu/ppw/Writing%20effective%20policy%20papers%20to%20influence%20decision.pdf>, Workshop, Young, Edin and Lisa Quinn, Local Government Public Service Reform Initiative Open Society Institute, Writing Effective Public Policy Papers. A Guide for Policy Advisers in Central and Eastern Europe, Open Society Institute, 2002, Budapest, Hungary <http://gi.osi.hu>  
[http://www.bos.org.yu/ppw/english\\_book.pdf](http://www.bos.org.yu/ppw/english_book.pdf)

9

## **Key Components of a Policy Paper**

- Establishes the issue
- Establishes the facts/scope of the problem
  - background history
  - current situation, including inadequacies in current policy
- Options/considerations
  - options, if agreement on recommendations is sought
  - considerations, if areas of contention need to be profiled
    - if options, at least the unacceptable status quo and an alternative
- Recommendation(s)
  - at least one
  - could be several, particularly if strategic response indicated
- Next Steps and Implications
  - issues in implementation
  - financial/institutional/human resource impacts



**Example  
Policy Issue  
Paper  
Outline**

- I. Background of the problem**
  - Description of the problem situation
  - Outcomes of prior efforts to solve problem
- II. Scope and severity of problem**
  - Assessment of past policy performance
  - Significance of problem situation
- III. Problem Statement**
  - Definition of problem
  - Major stakeholders
  - Goals and objectives
  - Measures of effectiveness
- IV. Policy Alternatives**
  - Description of alternatives
  - Comparison of future consequences
  - Spillovers and externalities
  - Constraints and political feasibility
- V. Policy recommendations**
  - **Criteria for recommending alternatives**
  - **Description of preferred alternative(s)**
  - **Outline of implementation strategy**
  - **Provisions for monitoring and evaluation**
  - **Limitations and unanticipated consequences**
- VI. References**
- VII. Annexes (if any)**

1

Suggested Template For A Policy Issue Paper/Policy Study--Often the policy study paper is called "issue paper"

Element	Guidelines for Content
Executive summary	Clear, concise, specific, understandable to intended audience. Include all the elements described in the paper, source, background, policy statement, highlight recommendations.
Background of the Issue/Problem	Description of the problem/situation: Incidence, novelty, urgency, changes over time, scope and severity (degrees), groups and numbers of people affected (demographic, epidemiological, socioeconomic characteristics and patterns); Assessment of current knowledge about the problem (body of evidence, validity and reliability); Prior policy performance and outcomes for all components of the problem (policy problems generally have various dimensions or components). Current activities, actors involved, relevant political, time related or resource related factors of significance.
Problem (Issue) Statement <sup>1</sup>	Clear definition and statement of the problem Major stakeholders identified and prioritized, including major value conflicts. Goals and objectives, measures of effectiveness for goals and objectives specified. Potential "solutions" or new understandings Estimate of the importance and accuracy of all the data. Implications of the information, assumptions, limitations.
Criteria	Consideration of all the relevant interests involved, most importantly the public interest. If appropriate, recognition of the impact of policies on the environment, on future generations, equity, public well being and community standards, etc. Include an operational definition and measures for each criterion, including guidelines on their measurement.
Policy Alternatives (Policy Futures)	Description of alternatives (also try to document the search) Systematic comparison (in terms of goals/criteria established previously, e.g. cost, effectiveness, equity, sustainability, political feasibility, etc.) Include relevant spillovers and externalities. Consider constraints (legal, resources, acceptability) and political feasibility issues.
Estimate of the Alternatives according to the Criteria	Identification and detail of all the costs Sensitivity analysis for changing conditions Recognition and incorporation of uncertainties Selection, development, verification and test of analysis models used. Explain any subjective judgments included.
Decision and Unfolding of Alternatives	Present the best arguments that support the policy change. Present the best arguments against the policy change. Discuss how the policy option may affect the problem. Document and justify the analysis.
Policy recommendations	Criteria for recommending alternatives (merit, Urgency? Need? Resources?); Description of preferred alternative(s); Argument to support the preferred or recommended alternative; Limitations and unanticipated consequences
Monitoring, Implementation and Evaluation	Recommend actions in these areas; outline an implementation strategy which would estimate broad political and organizational feasibilities, and make some provisions for monitoring and evaluation.
References	
Appendices	

## The Policy Memo

- Offers analysis and recommendations in reference to a specific situation/problem.
- It is short, concise, well organized, well written, convincing! (Decision-makers don't have time to read long, convoluted texts))
- It responds to the needs of a "client" who seeks advise on how to address a situation/problem that will need a policy decision
- The client could be a president, a prime minister, a member of cabinet, a legislator, YOUR BOSS!!)

## Example: Structure of a Policy Memo

Date

From To

Subject

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. The Problem
4. Background of the issue
5. Description of the policy arena/landscape
6. Policy Options
7. Analysis of trade-offs
8. Recommendation of a course of action
9. Conclusion
10. Bibliography of Sources

## A more detailed example...

## Also, refer to handout and CD-Rom for additional examples

MEMORANDUM			
TO: Name, position			
FROM: Name, position			
DATE: (May use date of proposed release)			
SUBJECT: "I recommend Action X to solve Problem Y."	The memo in a nutshell. One or two sentences that state the action, then the problem.		
SUMMARY: "Why Action X will solve Problem Y, and key implementation needs."	An executive summary of the problem, the recommended action and its basis, and the key implementation needs. In a very short paper with a good subject title, this is optional.		
PROBLEM: "The 'real' issue is Problem Y, which has these characteristics."	A brief description of how you "frame" the issue for your client. Identify how the status quo is in discordance with major organizational or policy objectives. Consider claims of harm (or opportunities for improvement) and evaluate the magnitude of the "problem".		
CONTEXT: "These are some additional crucial facts about Problem Y."	A brief discussion of historical, political, and/or technical context that provides a deeper understanding of the issue as you frame it. Only include information likely to be needed by the audience (clients and their clients, other interested parties)		
ALTERNATIVES: "This is my assessment of the likely outcomes of key options."	An alternative-criterion matrix and a summary of advantages and disadvantages of the status quo, your recommendation and at least one credible alternative. In a short memorandum, the alternative-criterion matrix may be attached as an appendix.		
Table: Comparison of Options for Addressing Problem Y			
	<i>Criterion A</i>	<i>Criterion B</i>	<i>Criterion C</i>
<i>Option V</i>	(Detailed evaluation, using Criterion A, of Option V's likely outcome)		
<i>Option W</i>			
<i>Option X</i>			
<i>Etc</i>			
Headline/brief description, typically of "maintain status quo"			
Each option has a brief title and description.			
The first option is usually some version of "maintain status quo".			
Advantages:	(brief bulleted items: good performance on alternative-criterion matrix)		
Disadvantages:	(effectiveness, benefits, political advantages, etc costs, risks, foregone benefits of continuing present policy)		
Headline/brief description, typically of credible option(s)			
At least one credible but not recommended alternative, provided to triangulate the probable consequences of your recommendation against something else, and against the status quo. The set needs to be small to be understandable.			
Advantages:			
Disadvantages:			
Headline/brief description, typically of recommended alternative			
Be certain that this section is particularly strong, and will clearly meet the "no surprise" test if your recommendation is accepted)			
Advantages:			
Disadvantages:			
RECOMMENDATION: "I recommend Action X, because..."	A summary comparison of alternatives, and justification of choice. Include an honest assessment of forgone benefits and any uncertainties, which may affect outcomes.		
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: "What people need to do, and when, to make X work."	A sequence of steps, ordered in time, showing what needs to be done, by whom, and when, to realize the recommended alternative—typically one sentence each.		
ACTION: "These are possible next steps on my recommendation."	Possible action steps to be initiated or checked. These may be contained in a highlighted box: See me; respond to comments; discuss with ___ and revise; prepare implementing memo for my signature; no because...		
APPENDICES: "These additional findings support my analysis because..."	List numbers and titles of appendices at the front, and begin each appendix on a new page. Each appendix should have a punch line box at bottom that answers the question: what critical finding, necessary to the analysis, do these data support? Be selective.		

---

## **Pay careful attention to possible factors that may diminish the quality of the product:**

- Neglecting the role/importance played by factors of risk and/or uncertainty.
  - Establishing arbitrary criteria
  - Failing to carry out a complete analysis (lack of resources, time, information)
  - Inadequate problem formulation
  - Oversimplifying and/or overcomplicating the problem definition.
  - Failing to iterate the problem definition when the context changes as the analysis progresses.
  - Bias introduced by the analysts
  - Miscommunication or lack of communication with the client.
- 

---

## **Ethics and values in public policy and in other decision-making processes**

## The analysis of ethical considerations is essential for health policy making because:

- Technical or scientific aspects are only part of health policy problems.
- They reach beyond the doctor-patient relationship
- Often difficult to know which problems are actually important
- Often difficult to assert whether the solution to the policy problems is the best, or even a good one.
- How individuals and societies confront patterns of illness in the world, and the determinants and consequences of those patterns.

## Moreover,

- Health policymaking assumes making public moral choices.
- Examples:
  - Allocation of resources
  - Priority setting
  - Patient's rights.
  - Right to die
  - Protection of research subjects.

## Who decides? What are the choices (trade offs) we must face?

**Individual interests vs. the common good?**

**Private vs. Public interests?**

**Risks to society vs. individual freedom?**

**Paternalism vs. informed consent?**

**Individual wellbeing vs. risks to others?**

**Efficiency vs. transparency?**

**Efficiency vs. equity?**

**Cost effectiveness vs. equity?**

**Political role vs. professional role? Of vs. personal role?**

**And so on....**

## Primum non nocere

“I will apply treatment for the benefit of the sick according to my ability and judgment; I will keep them from harm and injustice”

**3rd paragraph  
Hippocratic Oath**

## Ethical Principles

- **Autonomy**
  - Individual rights and decision-making, self-determination
  - Paternalism interferes with autonomy
- **Nonmaleficence**
  - Avoid doing harm
- **Beneficence**
  - First, do no harm
  - Do benefits outweigh risks?
- **Justice**
  - Distribution of resources
  - Fairness in treatment

## Examples of Ethical Concerns in Health

- Voluntary participation
- Informed consent (research and treatment)
- Patients' rights
- Exposure to risk or harm
- Anonymity
- Confidentiality
- Right to general or specific health services
- Pain management
- End of life issues
- Cloning
- Other...

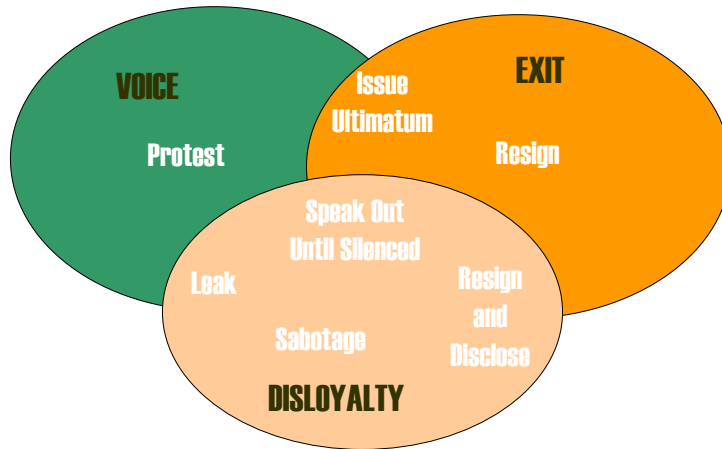
## Values, Moral and Ethics in Policy Development

- The policy decision-making process is conditioned by
  - the perception that the social actors have about the problem in question, and
  - the conflicts that may ensue (opposing values, motivations, interests and beliefs).
- Final decisions are often consistent (although they may not be explicit) with the political, professional, organizational, personal, and ideological values of the decision-makers.
- Values are beliefs of principles that motivate attitudes and actions; they define how individuals and organizations behave and decide to achieve their objectives.

## The following types of values are identified:

- **Ideological**
  - Decisions are driven by political beliefs systems.
- **Political**
  - driven by the political interests of groups, parties, individuals.
- **Organizational**
  - Public, private and non-profit entities motivate their members to act and take decisions based on shared beliefs.
- **Professional**
  - Refers to behavior norms that apply to the activity of professionals who act on the bases of these norms.
- **Personal**
  - May involve acting to benefit one's own interest (e.g. financial or other gains, such as reputation, prestige, social position) and may also depend on the individual's perceptions about the public's interest or what is considered adequate, correct or ethical.

## Alternative Responses to Value Conflict



**Decisions based on opinions**  
(values, resources)

**Decisions based on evidence**  
[systematic appreciation of the best  
available evidence]

## Types of Knowledge that Governments Use

1. Statistical knowledge
2. Policy knowledge
3. Scientific knowledge
4. Professional knowledge
5. Public opinion
6. Practitioner views and insights
7. Political knowledge
8. Economic knowledge
9. Classic intelligence

Adapted from Mulgan, G. Facing the Future: Engaging stakeholders and citizens in developing public policy" National Institute of Governance Conference, Canberra, Australia 23/24 April 2003.  
[http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Bibliographies/Research\\_Policy/Documents/Mulgan\\_2003.pd](http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Bibliographies/Research_Policy/Documents/Mulgan_2003.pd)

29

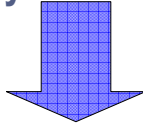
## In an ideal world, these elements would influence public policy:

- Scientific information
- Results of previous research and evaluations
- The use of systematic methods of analysis and design.
- Consideration of social and cultural values

**In fact, evidence would be enough to make good policy**

**“Rationally” it is possible to assume then that...**

- Useful measures
- Good data/evidence
- Competent analyses



**Will generate relevant information**

Capable of producing

**Good decisions and resource allocations**

However, the weight of science and the assessment of risks and benefits might be less than the perception of risk, political processes and events, the economy and the interest of stakeholders. Maybe there is some truth to Maynard Keynes statement...

---

*There is nothing a government hates more than to be well-informed; for it makes the process of arriving at decisions much more complicated and difficult.”*

John Maynard Keynes.  
The Times (March 11, 1937); Collected Writings, vol. 21, p. 409.

---

## Some concepts

**Evidence:** *“the available information supporting or otherwise a belief or proposition”*

- Facts or data over which it is possible to support a conclusion
- Based on probabilities
- It is cumulative and time sensitive

### **High quality evidence**

- empirically derived knowledge or information through a consistent and reproducible approach, which is internally consistent, valid and verifiable with the power of generalizability and relevance to the local setting

**Evidence-based Policy:** *“public policy informed by rigorously established evidence”.*

- Based on Evidence: Previous research proved its effectiveness

**Research:** *“any systematic effort to increase the stock of knowledge”*

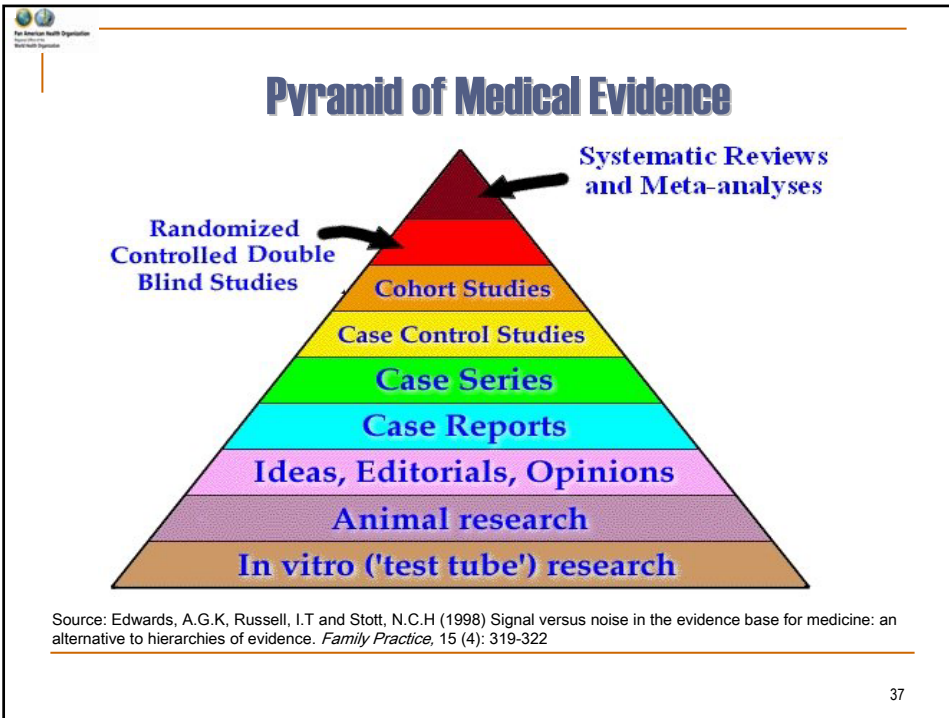
## Evidence-Based Medicine

*"the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of the individual patient. It means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research."*

**Sackett D. et al** BMJ 1996; 312: 71-2

## Origins

- Fast obsolescence of scientific knowledge
- Concern with cost control of health systems and services
- Increased political and public interest regarding the evidence that support decisions on effectiveness and safety in health care.
- Today, it is already part of medical curricula (learn how to use evidence for diagnostic and treatment decisions)



### Another View: Hierarchy of evidence in healthcare

- I-1 Systematic review and meta-analysis of two or more double-blind randomized control trials.
- I-2 One or more large double-blind randomized control trials.
- II-1 One or more well-conducted cohort studies.
- II-2 One or more well-conducted case-control studies.
- II-3 A dramatic uncontrolled experiment.
- III Expert committee sitting in review; peer leader opinion (e.g. narrative review).
- IV Personal experience.

Evidence-based policy and practice: Cross sector lessons from the UK. Sandra Nutley, Centre for Public Policy and Management, University of St Andrews, Research Unit for Research Utilisation.

## Advantages

- Radical change in medical practice.
- Can reduce asymmetries in cases where the patient has access to the information he/she needs.
- Integrates medical education with clinical practice.
- Can be learned at any stage of the medical career.
- Reduces uncertainties
- Can enable the better use of resources through the assessment of treatment effectiveness.

## Limitations

- The quality of the evidence may not be the best or always objective/neutral.
- It takes time to learn and practice EBM.
- Abuses may result in inappropriate protocols or dogmatic clinical practice.
- The benefits identified in one situation might not be generalized to practice.
- Limited access in developing countries.
- Gaps between what can be done and what can be financed.
- Limited information on the etiology, diagnostics and prognosis, decisions that depend on psychosocial factors, patient preferences and support strategies.

## Evidence-based public health

*“...The development, implementation, and evaluation of effective programs and policies in public health through application of principles of scientific reasoning, including systematic uses of data and information systems, and appropriate use of program planning models.”*

**Brownson et al., *J Public Health Management Practice* 1999,  
5:86-97**

---

## Background

- Increased dependence on externally produced knowledge in what is often characterised as a relatively non-ideological political climate
- The influence that sharing of practice can have when assessing policy effectiveness
- Increased emphasis on benchmarking and standards-setting within new modes of governance in public, private and voluntary sectors

---

## Evidence-based policy assumes that:

- Evidence drawn from scientific research is objective and value-free.
- RCTs represent the gold standard, but they are not the only source of evidence.
- Public policy ought to be based on evidence that can ensure the effectiveness of results and efficiency of implementation.
- The function of researchers is to produce scientific evidence.
- Decision-makers, managers and public health professionals are responsible for sustaining their decisions on scientific evidence.

## Different Notions of Evidence

### Researchers' Evidence

- 'Scientific' (Context free)
- Proven empirically
- Theoretically driven
- As long as it takes
- Caveats and qualifications

### Policy Makers' Evidence

- Colloquial (Contextual)
- Anything that seems reasonable
- Policy relevant
- Timely
- Clear Message

Source: Phil Davies Impact to Insight Meeting, ODI, 2005

## Challenges for Policy-makers and Practitioners

Integrating research, establishing ownership of the evidence, get appropriate 'buy-in' to the evidence, establish shared notions of evidence and incentives to use evidence, know how to access sound evidence, integrate research and policy, be strategic about policy and research.

### Added complexity:

- Is evidence the only basis for decision-making?
- Does science supply the only or the best evidence?
- Is science truly value free and objective?
- Is the implied separation of research and decision-making realistic or even desirable?
- Can the RCT provide the evidence needed for decision-making?

Fulop, N. Allen, P. Clarke, A. and Black, N. (2001) Studying the organisation and delivery of health services. London: Routledge. Mays, N. Wyke, S. Malbon, G. and Goodwin, N. (2001) The purchasing of health care by primary care organisations. Buckingham: Open University Press. Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997) Realistic Evaluation. London: Sage.

## Would it be more correct to say

- Evidence influenced?
- Evidence informed?
- or even just Evidence-aware?

## Four Requirements for Evidence Based Policy

1. Agreement as to the *nature* of evidence.
2. Strategic approach to the *creation* of evidence; development of a *cumulative knowledge base*.
3. Effective *dissemination* of knowledge; Effective *access* to knowledge.
4. Initiatives to *increase the uptake* of evidence (in policy and practice).

Evidence-based policy and practice: Cross sector lessons from the UK. Sandra Nutley, Centre for Public Policy and Management, University of St Andrews, Research Unit for Research Utilisation.

## What you need to know

### The external environment

- Who are the key actors?
- What are the key networks?
- What is their agenda?
- How do they influence the political context?

### The political context

- Is there political interest in change?
- Is there room for manoeuvre?
- How do they perceive the problem?

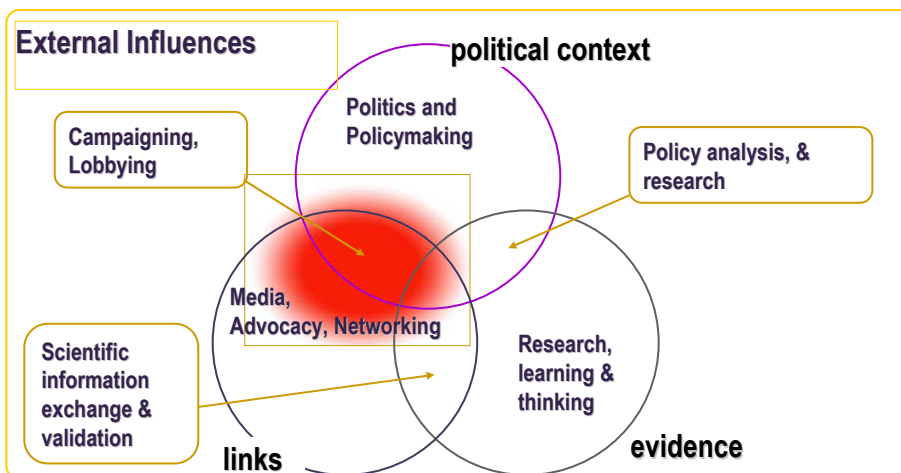
### The evidence

- Is it there?
- Is it relevant?
- Is it practically useful?
- Are the concepts new?
- Does it need re-packaging?

### Links

- How best to transfer the information?
- The media? Campaigns?

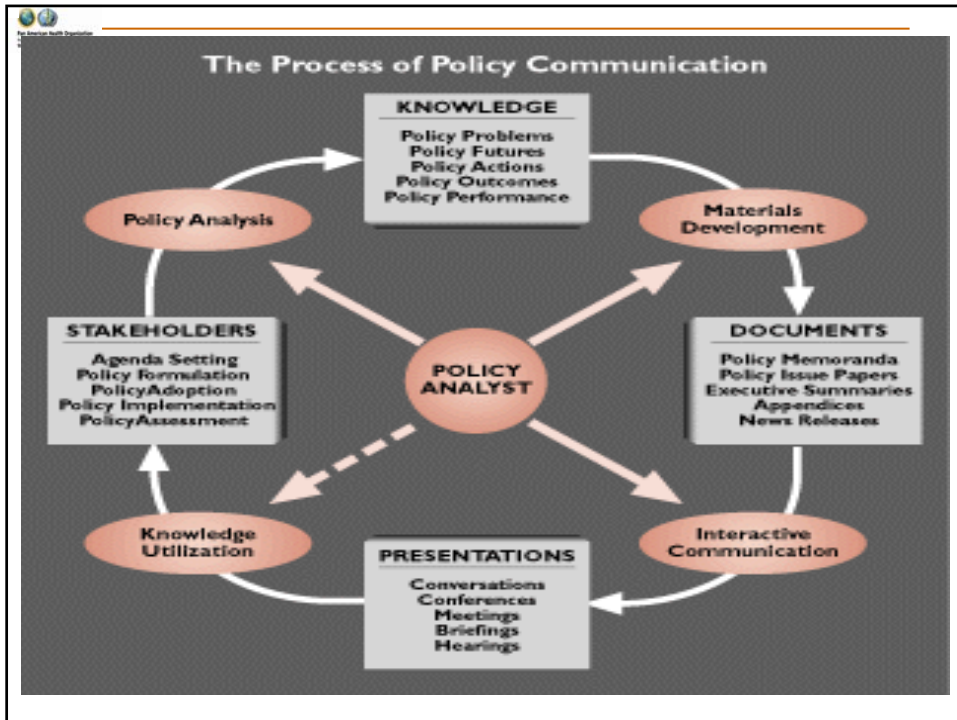
## A Practical Framework from the ODI



# The Craft of Policy Advice

Some authors state that the “real” three phases of policy analysis involve moving iteratively between:

- **the argument: the claims of the policy narrative**
  - Does it make sense (logic, fact, value)?
  - What are the likely outcomes of the proposed policy? benefits and costs? uncertainties and risks? What are the alternatives, what kind of outcomes might they yield? What are the key criteria for comparing options?
- **the politics: the policy narrative as a political and institutional event**
  - How and why did this policy emerge at this time?
  - What are the interest groups, alliances and forces which dominate the political field in which this policy was developed? How would these political dynamics shape what the will unfold in future? What other scenarios might be possible?
- **the ethics/the personal**
  - Rethinking my analysis of *argument* and *politics* in the light of *my personal investments*.
  - What are the institutional pressures shaping me? What guides my on judgements?
  - How do I assess the argument? How do I understand the problem, its causes, the preferred futures. Do I trust the logic? and the politics? How do I think/understand how society works, how about the different stakeholders?



### Communicating Policy Analyses

<b>Do</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Remember the client!</b> Keep in mind that your task is to provide useful advice.</li> <li>■ <b>Set priorities!</b> Organize your information carefully (essential material in the text, supporting material in appendices).</li> <li>■ <b>Decompose your analysis</b> into component parts.</li> <li>■ <b>Use headings that tell a story.</b> Avoid abstract headings such as “Market Failure”.</li> <li>■ <b>Be balanced!</b> Give appropriate coverage to problem analysis and solution analysis.</li> <li>■ <b>Acknowledge uncertainty</b> but then provide your resolution of it. Support your resolution with sensitivity analysis where appropriate.)</li> <li>■ <b>Be credible</b> by documenting as extensively as possible.</li> <li>■ <b>Be succinct.</b></li> <li>■ <b>Avoid jargon</b> and clearly explain any technical terms.</li> <li>■ <b>Be value overt.</b> Make explicit arguments for the importance of goals.</li> <li>■ <b>Write crisp text.</b> Favor short and direct sentences; use the active voice.</li> </ul>
<b>Don't</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Write an essay!</b> The difference between an essay and a well-structured policy analysis should be clear to you by now.</li> <li>■ <b>Tell the client everything that you know</b> as it comes into your head. It's fine to think nonlinearly, but write linearly.</li> <li>■ <b>Write a mystery!</b> Instead, state your important conclusions up front in an executive summary.</li> </ul>

Source: Weimer and Vining

### **Research/Analysis:**

- Build the argument: collect data about problems, causes and strategies, compare options
- Map the politics: different perspectives and preferred directions
- Build consensus: sharing the tasks of problem definition and research

### **Draft, redraft and redraft!!**

- Clarifying the storyline
- Building the argument
- Mapping the political context
- Projecting scenarios

### **CONSULT**

- Test the argument (fact & logic)
- Test the scenarios (stakeholders & disciplines)
- Is it strategic? Focus on interventions that will make a difference. Identify risks and uncertainties
- Is it developmental? (open to unforeseen contingencies? developing our own capability for tomorrow's decisions?)
- Reflect on my own prejudices and aspirations
- Build consensus: build constituency

# **Role and Competencies of the Analyst**

## Responsibilities of the Analyst/Advisor

- To the client
- To the public interest, to the consumers
- To him/herself
- To the profession and the practice
- To the law, justice, equity, effectiveness, efficiency.

## Bias are often inevitable, but the analyst can mitigate them

- ◆ Identify the assumptions.
- ◆ Keep good records
- ◆ Use a variety of sources of information.
- ◆ Use replicable models and methods
- ◆ Identify the goals and values of the “client”
- ◆ Identify formal and informal, internal and external stakeholders.
- ◆ Address professional and ethical aspects related to the issue at hand. (effectively!)

# Challenges

- Who defines what is correct?
- Whose are the goals that must be pursued?
- What is actually the correct path? Ultimately, who do we serve?
- What should be the priority, try to do good or try not to do harm?
- Should he/she provide “neutral” advise, or advocate according to values/beliefs? Support or provoke?

## Three Views on the Appropriate Role of the Policy Analyst

### Fundamental Values

	Analytical Integrity	Responsibility to Clients	Adherence to One's Conception of Good
<b>Objective Technician</b>	Let analysis speak for itself. Primary focus should be predicting consequences of alternative policies. Analysis rarely produces definitive conclusions.	Clients are necessary evils; their political fortunes should be secondary considerations. Keep distance from clients; select institutional clients whenever possible.	Relevant values should be identified, but trade-offs among them should be left to clients. Objective advice promotes good in the long run.
<b>Client's Advocate</b>	Take advantage of ambiguity to advise clients' positions.	Clients provide analysts with legitimacy. Loyalty should be given in return for access to privileged information and to political processes.	Select clients with compatible value systems; use long-term relationships to change clients' conceptions of good.
<b>Issue Advocate</b>	Analysis rarely produces definitive conclusions. Emphasize ambiguity and excluded values when analysis does not support advocacy.	Clients provide an opportunity to advocacy. Select them opportunistically; change clients to further personal policy agenda.	Analysis should be an instrument for progress toward one's conception of the good society.

## Some useful skills and competencies for policy analysts

- Collect, organize and communicate information derived from various sources with limited time.
- Knowledge to apply different theoretical frameworks to social problems.
- Qualitative and quantitative social research skills (e.g. data analysis, statistics, epidemiology, scenario building, planning, management, evaluation).
- Ability to assess political and organizational behaviors, and to anticipate possible consequences of policy options in uncertain environments (foresight capacity).
- Personal and professional ethics, integrity, accountability, responsibility to the client, the profession and the public interest.
- Creativity, critical thinking, tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity.
- Ability to manage the political and organizational dimensions of policy issues and conflicting arguments.
- Negotiation capacity and ability to establish effective partnerships with a broad range of public and private stakeholders.
- Excellent team work, good interpersonal relations, stamina and communication skills.

## Finally, some “rules for rulers

- Keep the inner circle small
- Select inner circle members on emphasis on skills and problem solving ability, do not choose solely on the basis of past loyalty and friendship.
- Take with you only those loyalists, friends, and politicians who are also doers.
- Choose experts with high standing in the field
- Let others keep your calendar, but you keep control of access to your advisers.
- Know what you know in each advisory situation before making a decision.
- Be aware that loyalty to your advisers will affect your reaction to their advice.
- Be aware of the multiple and conflicting loyalties between your advisers.
- Overcome your reluctance and have adviser exit when necessary.
- Control the conditions of exit.
- Avoid public protest resignations.
- Have the disloyal exit.

---

## Suggested Reading (s)

- Dunn, W. (1994) *Public Policy Analysis : An Introduction*. New Jersey : Englewood Cliffs. Appendices 1,2, 3.
- Lomas J, Culyer T, McCutcheon, McCauley L, Law S. *Conceptualizing and combining evidence for health system guidance*. Canadian Health Services Research Foundation, 2005: 1–43. [http://chrsrf.org/other\\_documents/pdf/evidence\\_e.pdf](http://chrsrf.org/other_documents/pdf/evidence_e.pdf)
- Musso, J. (1999) *The Tradecraft of Writing for Policy Analysis and Management*. School of Policy, Planning and Development. University of Southern California.  
<http://www.usc.edu/schools/sppd/private/documents/students/resources/tradecraft.pdf>
- RAND. *Guidelines for Preparing Briefs*. (1996) RAND. Santa Monica, California.
- Young, Eoin and Lisa Quinn. (2002) *Writing Effective Public Policy Papers: A guide for Policy Advisors in Central and Eastern Europe*. Open Society Institute. Budapest.  
<http://igi.osi.hu/publications/2002/112/Guidelines-arabian.pdf>
- Weiss, C. H. (2001) What kind of evidence in evidence-based policy? *Third International, Inter-disciplinary Evidence-Based Policies and Indicator Systems Conference*, July 2001 <http://www.cemcentre.org/eb2003/Carol%20Weiss%20COLUMNS%20WITHOUT%20SHADING.doc>
-