

Office of the  
ICANN Ombudsman



PACIFICA

HUMAN COMMUNICATIONS

**Evaluating Ombudsman Offices:  
*How do You Know What You Know  
and  
A Value Model***

International Ombudsman  
Association, Third Annual  
Conference

Boston, April 2008

# What We'll Do

- Observing the lexicon and language
  - How does what we say define the profession and how we are regarded?
- Ensuring the model
  - You say you are an Ombudsman and that you practice like an Ombudsman– Prove it.
- Doing the math to convince others of your program's "value" benefit
- Following a proven Assessment Process

# Your Hosts

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- Doctoral candidate
- Canadian
- Practitioner & Researcher

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# To Start

- What is the purpose of your Office of the Ombudsman?
  - Is this what you or your Organization wants?
  - How do you know that?
- Are you structured to deliver that?
  - How do you know?
  - Has anyone helped you check?
- What value does your Office of the Ombudsman create and deliver?

# Lexicon

## Measurement

1. The act of measuring or the process of being measured.
2. A system of measuring: measurement in miles.
3. The dimension, quantity, or capacity determined by measuring: the measurements of a room.

*(dictionary.com)*

### **For our purposes:**

Activities, undertaken PRIMARILY by the Ombudsman, to determine what outputs and outcomes occur or not, and what satisfaction results from these activities.

# Lexicon

## Evaluation

1. Act of ascertaining or fixing the value or worth of
2. An appraisal of the value of something  
[synonym: valuation, rating]
3. Converting an expression into a value using some reduction strategy.

*(dictionary.com)*

### **For our purposes:**

Efforts to determine the economic and/or humanistic value of Ombudsman activities and the outcomes of these activities. Can be determined by the Ombudsman with input from the organization and external experts. Greater validity when generated by others.

# Lexicon

## Effectiveness

1. a. Having an intended or expected effect.  
b. Producing a strong impression or response;  
striking: an effective performance
2. Capable of producing a desired effect:  
an effective reprimand; an effectual complaint;  
an efficacious remedy. *(dictionary.com)*

## For our purposes:

The alignment among Ombudsman activities, these activities' outcomes, and the intended effects desired by an informed and well-meaning host organization. Generally determined by the organization in concert with the Ombudsman or other experts.



# Lexicon

## Assessment

1. The classification of someone or something with respect to its worth [synonym: appraisal]
2. The market value set on assets
3. The act of judging or assessing a person or situation or event [synonym: judgment]

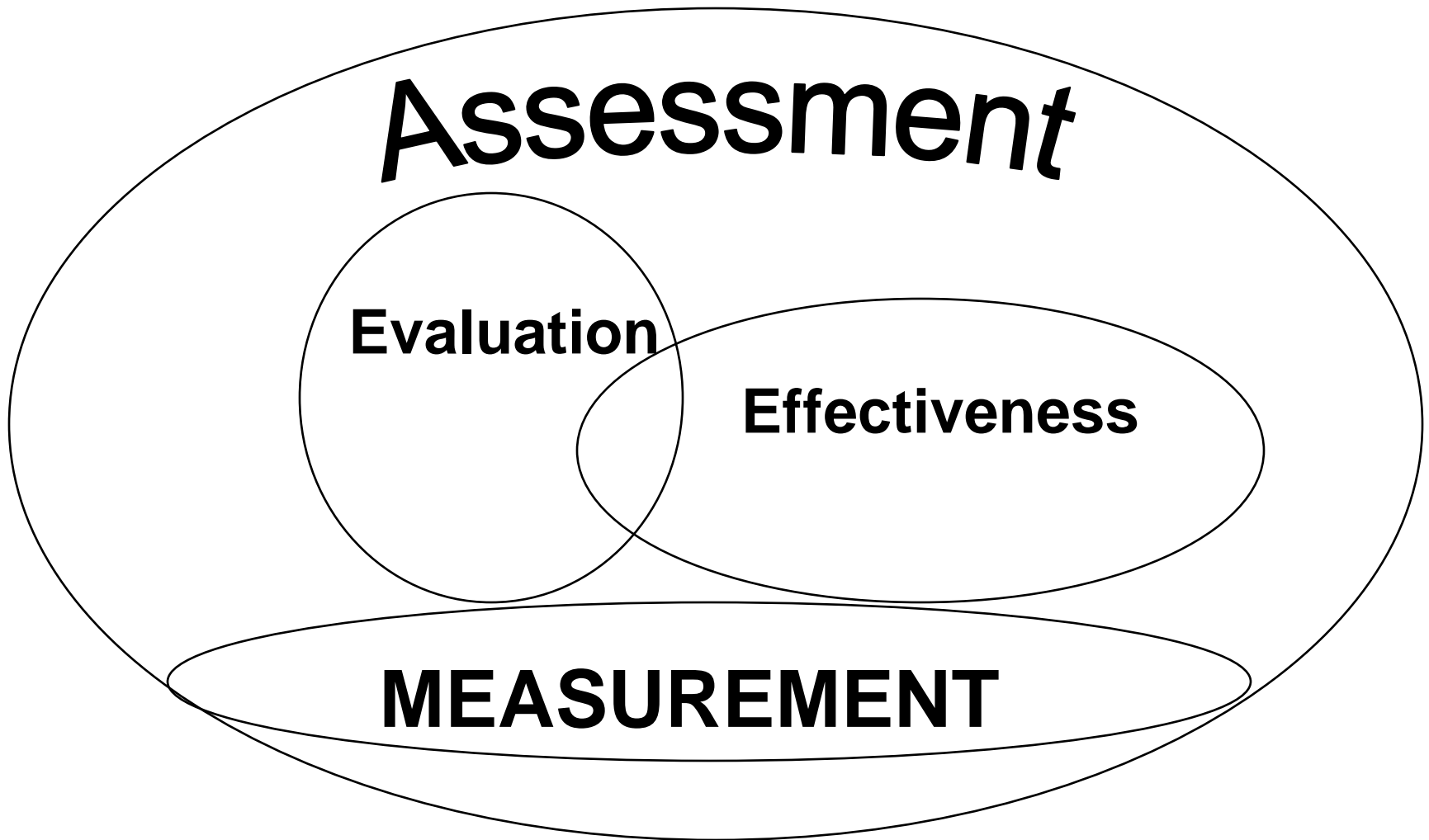
*(dictionary.com)*

### **For our purposes:**

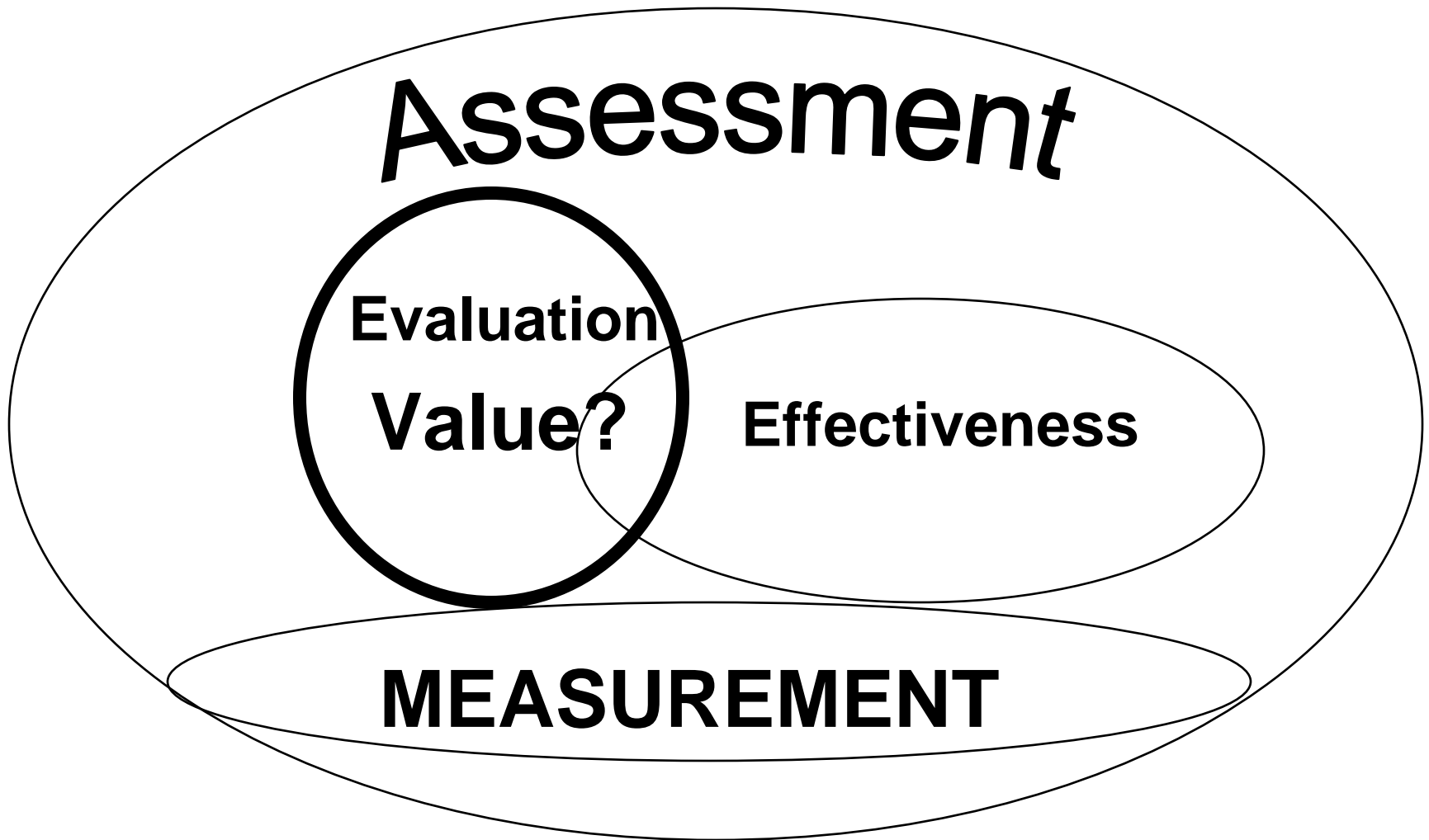
The entire set of activities undertaken to understand an Office of the Ombudsman's activities, outputs and the value of these, i.e. a set of sets.

Likely done by others, with the Ombudsman's support.

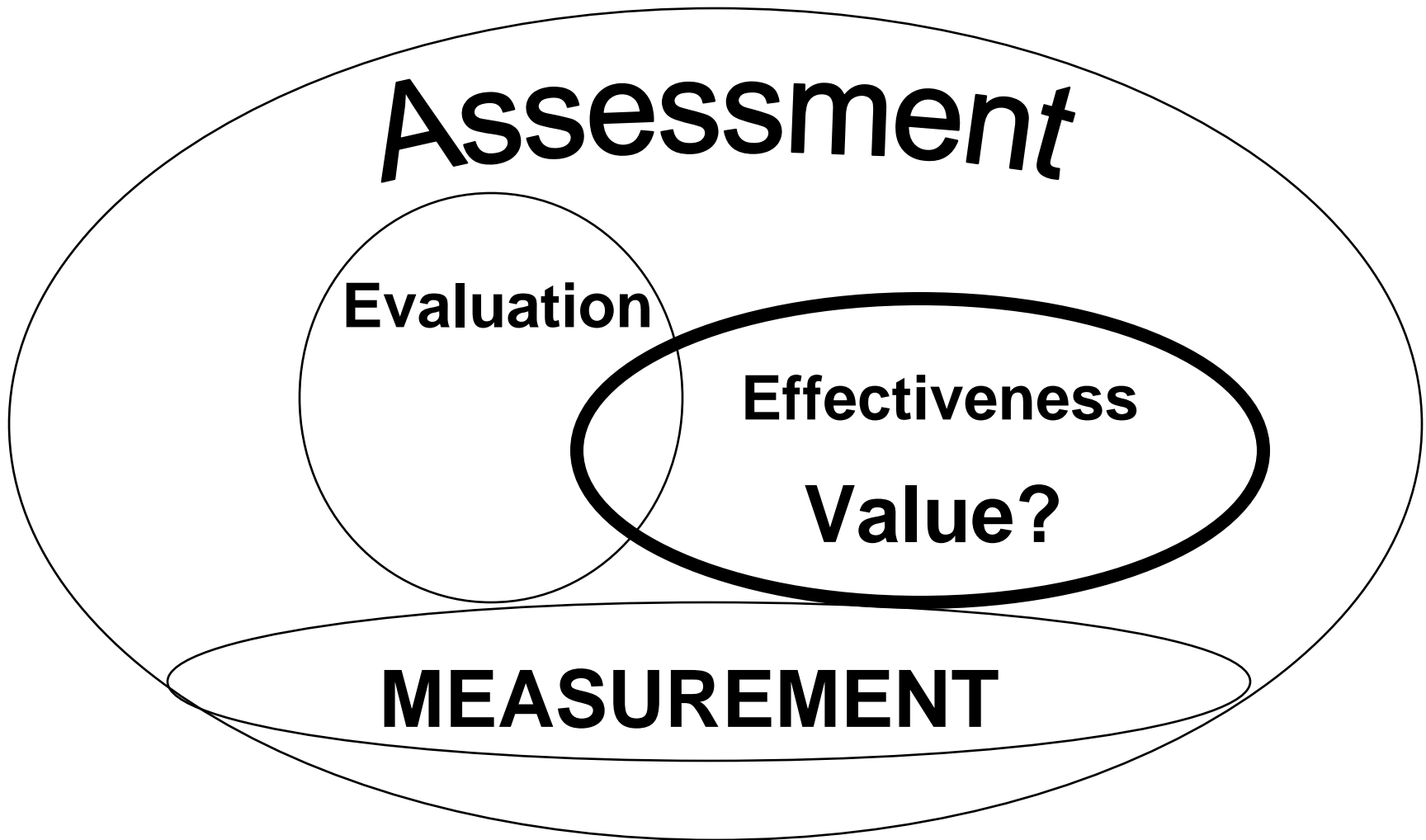
# “Value locator” Model



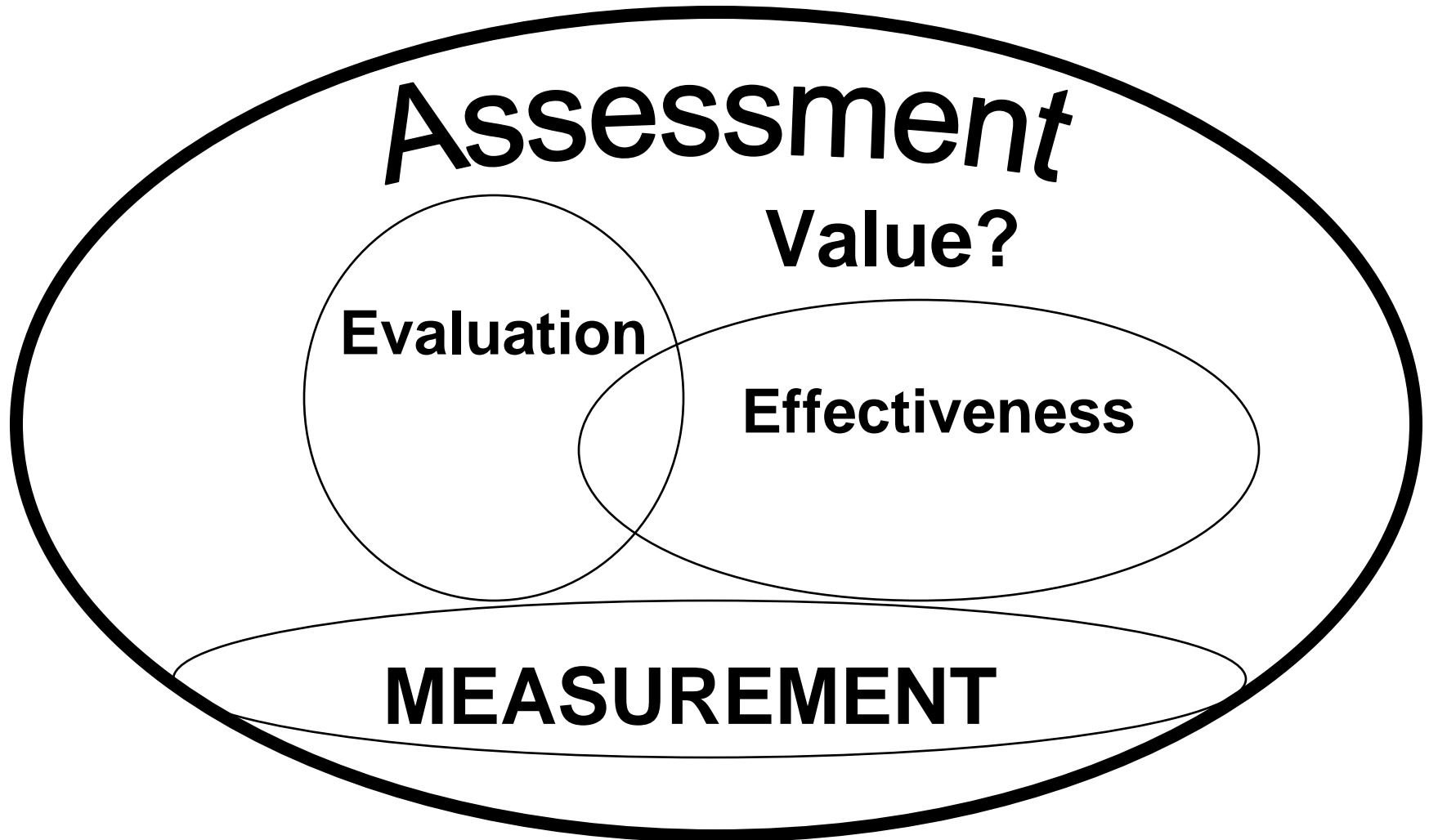
# “Value locator” Model



# “Value locator” Model



# “Value Locator” Model



# Are Words Important?

- Ombudsman

# Are Words Important?

- Ombudsman
- Ombudsperson

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- Ombudsman
- Ombudsperson
- Ombuds



# Are Words Important?

- Ombudsman
- Ombudsperson
- Ombuds
- Ombuddy

# Dictionary...

- ombudsman [ˌɒmbʊdzmən] noun  
an official appointed to look into  
complaints *especially* against a  
government

Czech: **ombudsman** Danish: **ombudsmand**

Dutch: **ombudsman** German: der

**Ombudsmann** :Hungarian, **ombudsman**:

Italian: **ombudsman**: Lithuanian:

**ombudsmenas**, Norwegian: **ombudsmann**

# Are Words Important?

- Mid

# Are Words Important?

- Mid
- Middy

# Are Words Important?

- Mid
- Middy
- Midperson

# Are Words Important?

- Mid
- Middy
- Midperson
- Midhusband

# Are Words Important?

- Mid
- Middy
- Midperson
- Midhusband
- Midwife

# Words Are Important...

Words create:

recognition,

value, and

respect

for the profession, your office, and you



# So, You Say You're an Ombudsman? Prove it!

- Can you prove:
  - Recognition?
  - Value?
  - Respect?
- On EACH of three levels
  - The profession, Your office, and You
- How? Using what tools??

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- *Demonstrates Value*
- *Shows your program is working*
- *Honestly talks about what can be improved*
- *Identifies the successes you can celebrate*
- *Illustrates profession linked and service standards*
- *Exemplifies integrity*

# Start with Overview Questions

## Relevance

- Is there a continued need for the Office of the Ombudsman?
- Is the Office of the Ombudsman relevant for the continued success of the entity?



# Start with Overview Questions

## Management Support

- Are the resources given to the Office of the Ombudsman sufficient to its mandate?

# Start with Overview Questions

## Program Delivery

- Has the Office of the Ombudsman been able to discharge the mandate?
  - Relationships?
  - Backlog?
  - Timely, effective results?
  - Change in the environment?
  
- Very much dependent on your office type and mandate

# Start with Overview Questions

## Cost Effectiveness of Operations

- Does your program conduct its work as a productive and efficient part of the organization?
- Are there alternatives to your Ombudsman's Office?

# Then Add Evaluation Criteria..

- # of people using Ombudsman services  
(call centre, website, complaint form etc)
- # and type of complaints
- # and type of resolutions
- # and type of media mentions that focus on the Office of the Ombudsman
- % of complainants/community who agree there is a need for the Ombudsman
- % of complainants/community who know of an alternative to resolving a complaint if Ombudsman did not exist

# Your Turn...

- Management
- Relevance
- Program Delivery
- Cost Effectiveness
- Develop one question and criteria for each

# Your Value in Your Organization

## Four perspectives on value

- Intended/Desired (designers)
- Expected (users & potential users, partners & collaterals, other stakeholders)
- Appreciated (recognized)
- Unappreciated (missed)

# Sources of Value

- **Economic**

- Time
- Productivity
- Workforce
- Hard assets
- Risk Management
- Reputation
- Culture
  
- Others?

- **Humanistic**

- Morale
- Trust
- Creativity
- Risk Taking
- Reputation
- “Of Choice”
- Culture
  
- Others?

# A Two-part Value Model

- "Cost-Effectiveness of Ombudsman Offices"  
Anthony Perneski & Mary Rowe
- "Formality Avoidance as Cost Effectiveness"  
John Zinsser



# A Value Example

## Acme's Ombudsman Generated Savings for One Year

Productivity		\$1,197,351
Management Time		\$1,030,786
Personnel		\$1,524,798
Legal		\$0
Miscellaneous		\$200,000
	Sub	\$3,952,935
Formal Costs Avoided		\$3,892,890
	Total	\$7,845,825

# Cost Effectiveness from Value

Acme's Ombudsman returned \$7,845,825  
or more than \$9.50 for every \$1 invested.

- This return is in addition to an appreciated but unknowable value of reduced litigation costs.
- This return does not include many additional and especially humanistic benefits.
- This return is **EXTREMELY** conservative.

# Productivity

- Multiply number of resolved cases by the productivity percentage increase (.02).  
Then, multiply this result by the average loaded salary of all employees.
- Alternatively multiply productivity increase by the number of parties to case by the daily loaded salary by duration of issue.

# Management Time

- Multiply the number of cases involving management in the issues by the daily management average loaded salary. Then, multiply the result by the number of days of the case.
- Multiply result by .1.

# Personnel

- Retained employees = number of satisfaction survey results stating “would have left.”
- Multiply number of retained “desired” employees by 1.7 times the average loaded salary.
- Multiply number of retained “highly desired” employees by 2.4 times the average loaded salary.

# Formal Costs Avoided

- Determine the average cost for each formal process.
  - Include process and outcome costs.
- Identify types of cases with multiple cases going to formal levels.
- Count the number of cases “of type” managed to close by the ombudsman. (not going to formal levels).
- Multiply the number of cases not going forward of type by the average process cost.
  - Weight increase for serious cases.

# Additional Value Contributions

- Ombudsman Handles Issues No One Else Does
  - Less likely of the issue being “stranded.”
- Ombudsman Enhances Other Programs
  - More “just-right” issues navigated to the best resource equates to more efficient programs & resolutions
- Ombudsman Adds Educational Value
  - Coaching and processes used— interest-based negotiation, active listening, etc., teaches users better communication, conflict management techniques, and interpersonal skills.

# To Estimate Value You Must Know

## **Activities**

- What you do
- Who you do it for  
(level, loaded cost, cost to replace)
- How many involved
- How long it takes  
(duration and time in step/activity)



# To Estimate Value You Must Know

## **Outcomes**

- Individual impacts  
(retention, envaluement, etc.)
- Case impact  
(formality averted, individual & other changes)
- Collateral impacts  
(others - individual/program - involved, impacted or not)
- Environmental or System impacts  
(institutional changes, reputation enhancement protection, etc.)

# Assessment Principles

- Fair, honest, accurate
- Established assessment plan
- Understandable and relevant criteria
- Assessment tied to comparative analysis
- Multi-faceted analysis
- Use of outside assessment experts

# My Assessment Criteria

- Multi stage, multi pronged, multi year
- Ongoing, formative, summative

# To Begin

## Plan the assessment

- Results Based Management Accountability Framework (RMAF)

<http://www.icann.org/ombudsman/documents/rmaf-08feb05.pdf>

- Logic model
- Seven assessment questions
  - 15 criteria

# Steps to Date

- Three sets of ongoing assessment questions for the Annual Report
- Statistical Comparison
- Client Satisfaction Survey
- Literature Based assessment
- and Independent Review
- <http://www.icann.org/ombudsman/program.html>

# What To Do With the Criteria

- Compare the criteria to your practice
- Apply
  - Logic
  - Fair and reasonable standards and comparisons
- Use your
  - Knowledge base
  - Documentation, annual reports, charter
  - Survey findings

# 50 Questions -The List

- Bear in mind, The List is not limited to one of organizational, executive, or classical Ombuds.
- It is a generic list, and some criteria may not apply to you, or some criteria may be repetitive.
- Other sources may also speak to your Office of the Ombudsman.

# The Third Party Review

- Fact-Check/Verify
- Commentary
- A neutral, independent voice about Office of the Ombudsman functions
  - For Leadership
  - For Users
  - For the Ombudsman



# The Third Party Review

- Simple process
  - Review the contributing material/report
  - Interview (if needed)
  - Examine performance claims via data
- Simple report
  - Repetition
  - Augmentation of voice

# The Third Party Review

- Adds another iteration/a hand
- Enhances veracity
- Relieves self-promotional challenge

# 50 Questions - Context

- When one endeavors to determine what any ombudsman program, of any type, does or achieves, the absence of established measurement, evaluation, and assessment criteria immediately becomes apparent.
- Only recently has the subject received meaningful attention. Much more remains necessary.

# 50 Questions - Limitations

- Not about program performance
- Does not quantify Office of the Ombudsman activities/outcomes (measurement).
- Does not examine measures to generate a value proposition (evaluation).
- Does not pursue whether the organization achieves, by creating the Office, any intended outcome (effectiveness).

# So, now what???

Who do you give copies/summaries to?

- Board of Directors
- Management
- Staff
- Stakeholders
- Public postings (Annual Report – website)
- Other Ombudsman Offices
- Other

# How Do You.....?

- Implement improvements you identify
- Fix problems
- Celebrate your successes
- Communicate:
  - your contribution and program integrity
- Deal with service standards

Questions?

# Contact Us

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