

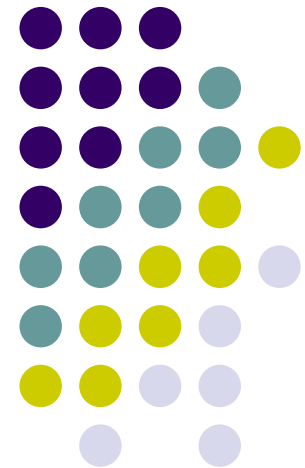
# Thinking about evaluating a program

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# Today's focus



Library program evaluation as applied research:

systematic data gathering methods

to measure service activities

for the managerial purpose of making  
improvements

# Manager's perspective



Service  
Management

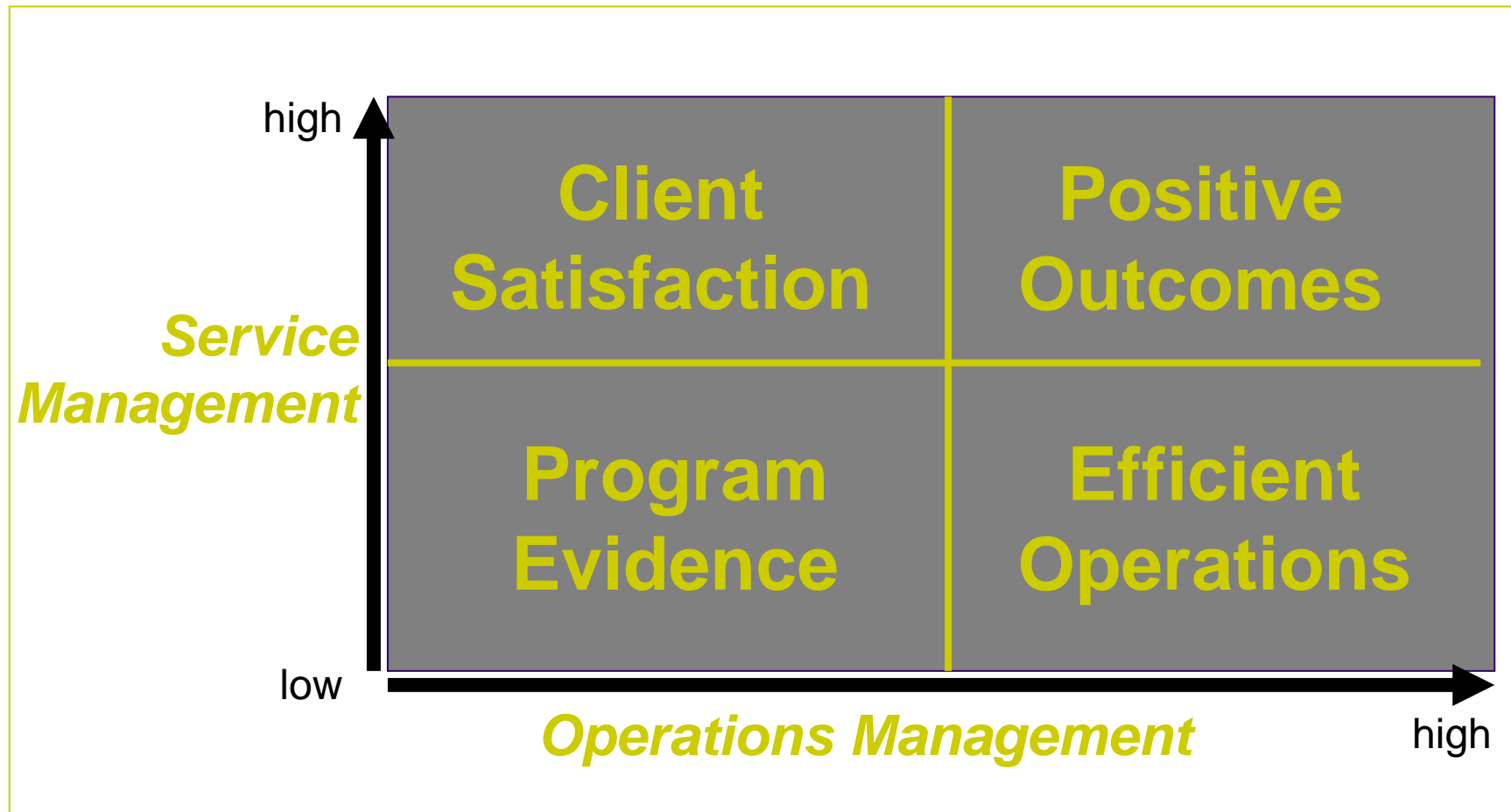
Operations  
Management

# Today's questions

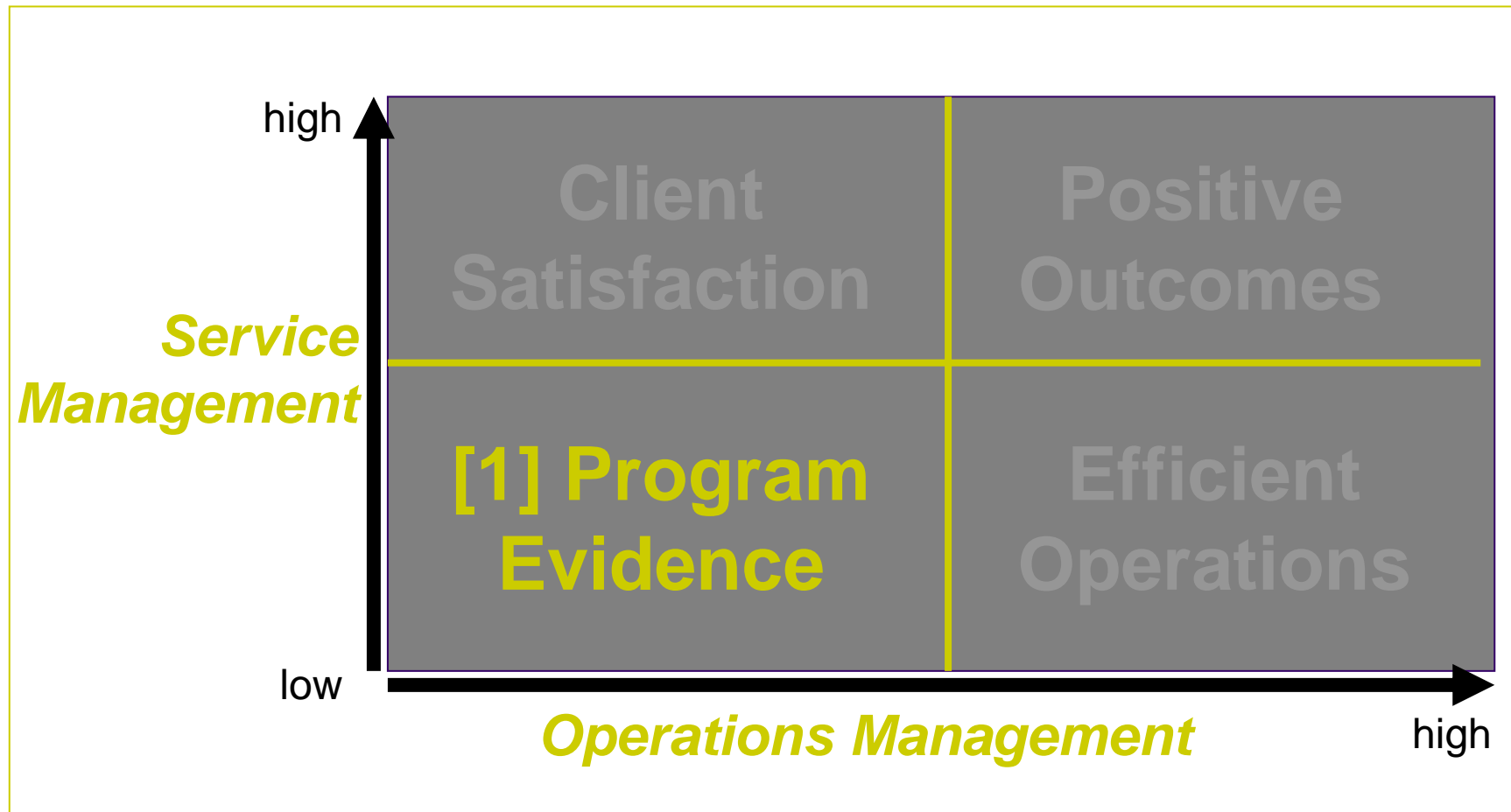


- Why conduct a program evaluation?
- What constitutes a program evaluation?
- How is it done?
- What are the results of doing it?

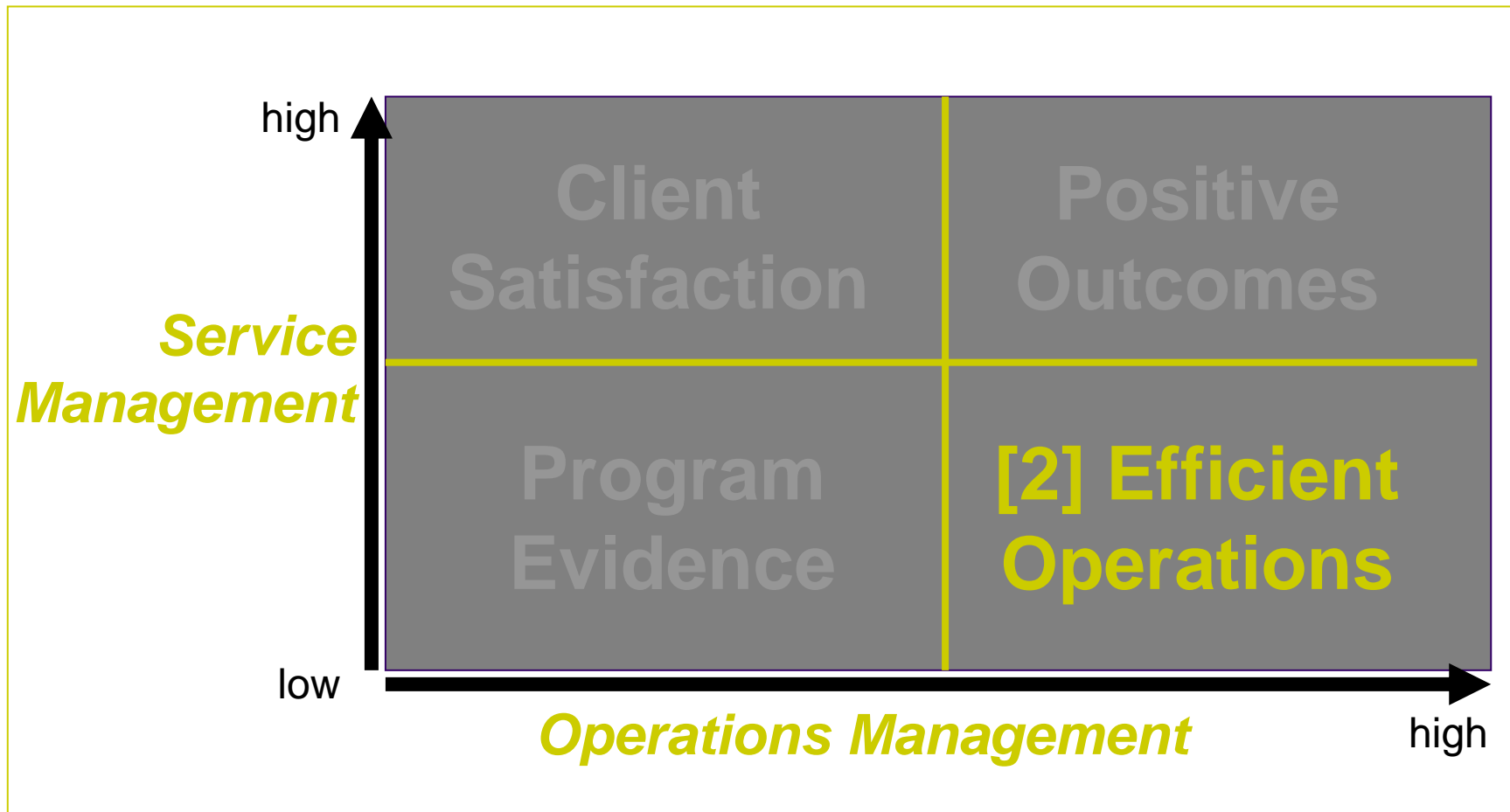
# Why conduct a program evaluation?



# Motivation 1: Fulfill grant requirement



# Motivation 2: Showing improvement

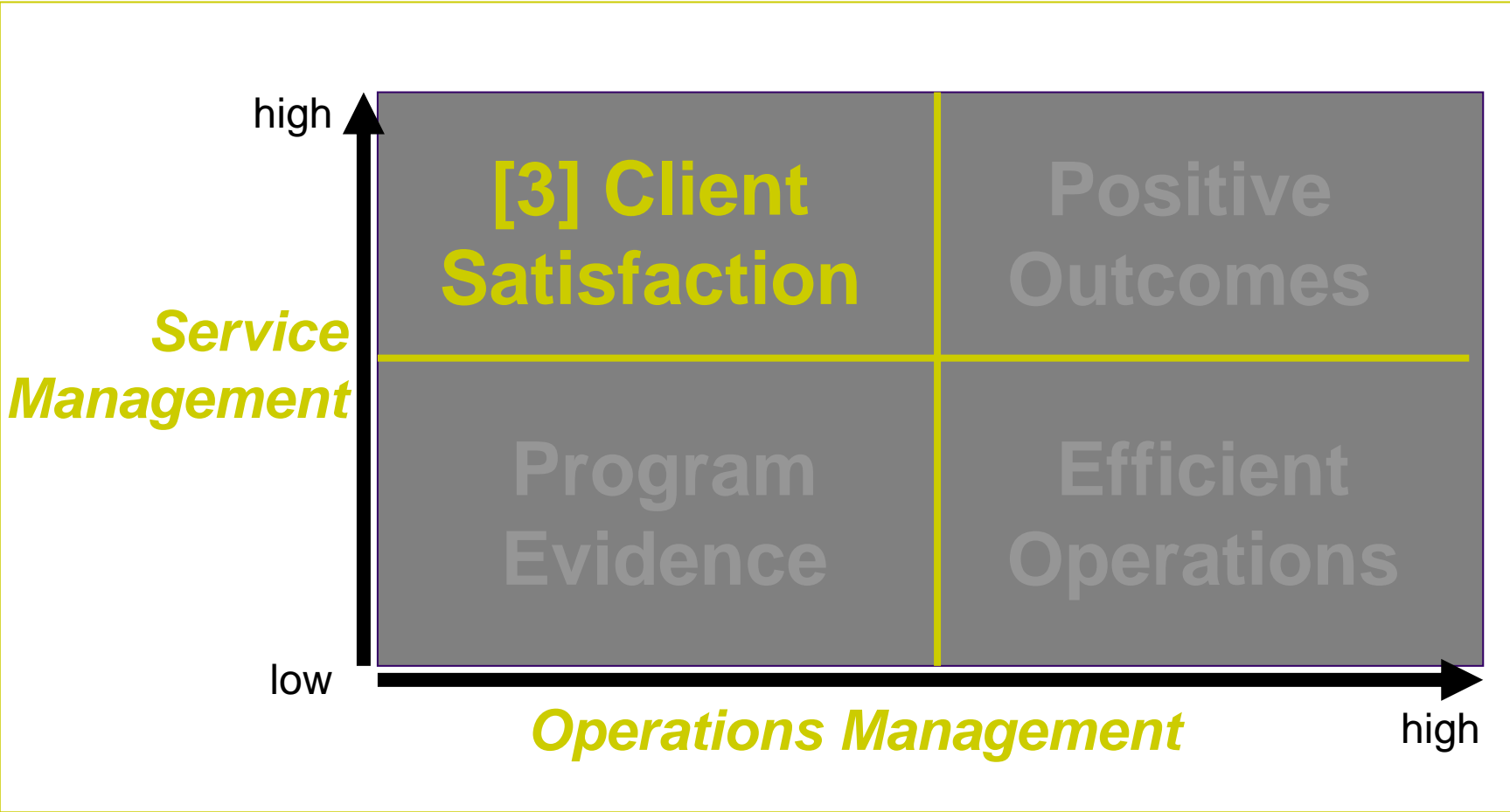
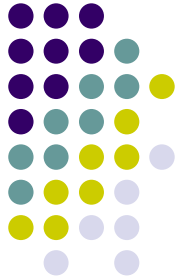


# Library performance standards

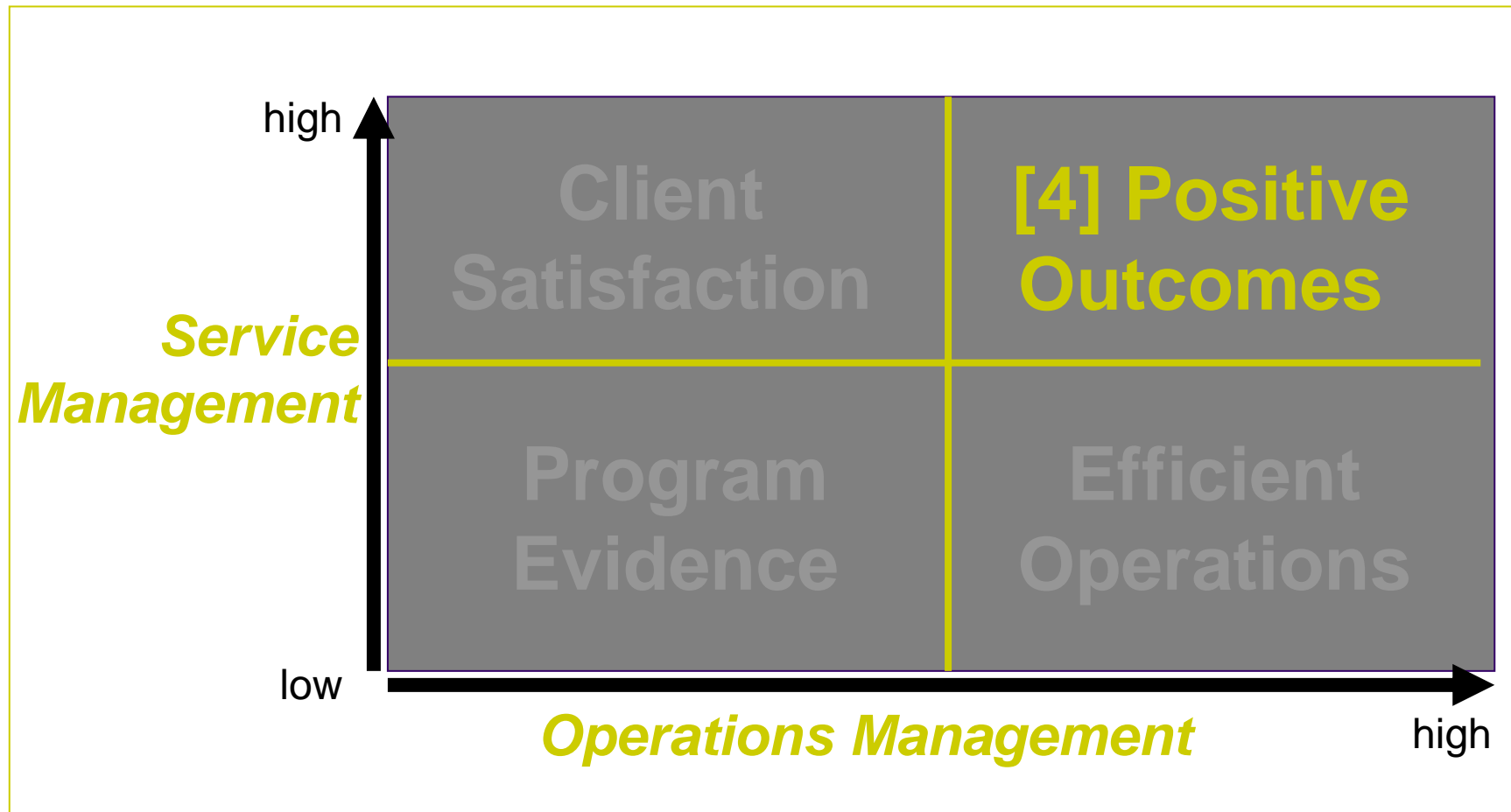


- Adequacy of collections
- Effective organization
- Size of staff
- Library facilities
- Adequacy of library budgets
- Library management
- Cooperative activities

# Motivation 3: Focus on the client



# Motivation 4: Focus on both clients and operations



# Outcomes evaluation: Impetus



- Accountability models:
  - Government Performance & Results Act 1993
  - United Way of America
  - Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Communicating benefits
- Build partnerships and collaborations
- Help determine expansion or replication
- Identify exemplars

# Why conduct a program evaluation?



***To obtain information  
for making decisions  
about the program's future***

# What constitutes a program evaluation?



- No single set of elements
- Repeatedly found:
  - Purpose
  - Data gathering methodology
  - Results
- Measurement units:
  - Inputs
  - Processes
  - Outputs
  - Outcomes

# Measurement units



- **INPUTS**: resources needed to run a program
- **PROCESSES**: define how a program is run
- **OUTPUTS**: units of service the program provides
- **OUTCOMES**: impact the program has on those in contact with it

# Plan the evaluation: purpose



- What decisions?
- What kind of information?
- Who are audiences?
  
- Formulate baseline of activity
- Determine if goals are met
- Compare performance to standards

# Plan the evaluation; data gathering methodology



- Match methodology to purpose
- Tradeoffs between quantitative and qualitative methodologies
  - Breadth and depth
  - Generalizability and targeted specific population
  - Costs and effort
- Keep perspective on timeliness, effort, costs and useful results

# Planning a program evaluation: Mixed-methods approach



## Methodology

- Qualitative
- Quantitative
- Qualitative

## Data collection approach

- explorative: focus group interview
- descriptive: survey
- explanatory: personal interview

# Plan the evaluation: results



- Present results in a way useful to those making decisions about the program
- Most data gathering methods have established procedures for analyzing resulting data
- Audience sensitive presentation

# How are program evaluations done?



- Effective preparation
- Take action
- Focus on what is most needed
- Adapt tools
- No single approach

# Illustration: *Evaluating Library Instruction*



1. Determine why you need to do evaluation
2. Determine what you need to know
3. Determine whom to ask
4. Determine the best way to find out what you need
5. Develop the questions
6. Pretest & revise the questions
7. Assemble the questionnaire
8. Include cover letter
9. Determine how and by whom are results to be tallied
10. Report the results

# Illustration: Assessing Service Quality



- Identify coverage
- Identify information to gather for the purpose
- Select appropriate methods to gather data
- Pretest or adapt tools
- Interpret data
- Report findings

# Outcomes measurements: Illustrative evidence of “value”



- Few mechanisms exist to provide evidence of how libraries provide value

- Surrogates for value: circulation and volume

- Guides for conducting outcome evaluations:

IMLS: <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/basics.shtm>

IBEC:

<http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu//default1024.aspx>

# IBEC tips to conduct outcomes-based evaluation



1. Getting started
2. Collecting data
3. Analyzing data
4. Using what you find

# How are program evaluations done: Human resources



- Experts -- for hire

National Science Foundation [2002] *User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation:*

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02057/start.htm>

- Library staff—training support
- Speculations why librarians generally lack enthusiasm to undertake evaluations

# Results: “Culture of assessment”

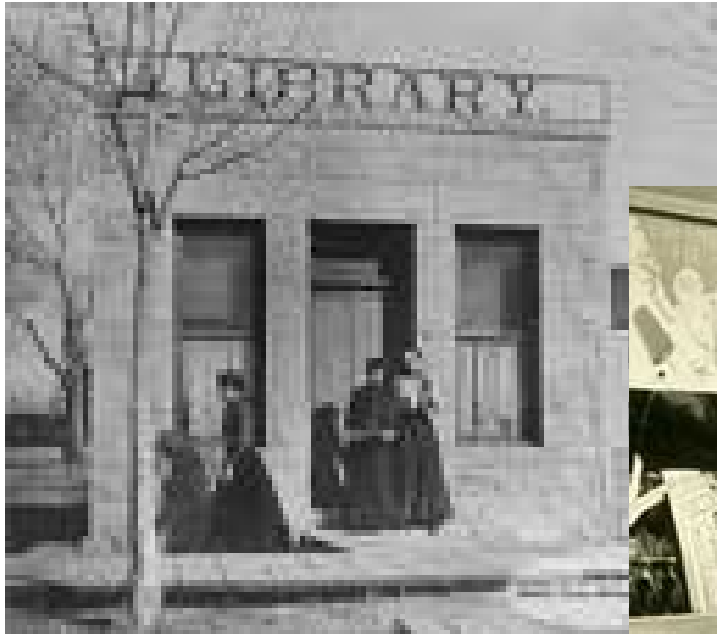
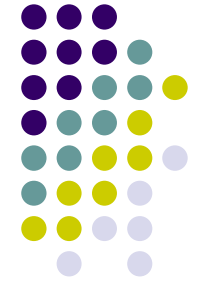


Promote the gathering and use of data for  
decision making

Example: University of Washington Library:

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment>

# Finally....



# Driving TICFIA Evaluations:

[http://www7.nationalacademies.org/cfe/David\\_Wiley\\_Written\\_Submission.pdf](http://www7.nationalacademies.org/cfe/David_Wiley_Written_Submission.pdf)



## PURPOSE:

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

1. Develop new materials made available to US users
2. Sustain the projects
3. Facilitate development of new technologies & standards of digital preservation & dissemination

## USE OF RESULTS

1. Improving program & enhancing its effectiveness...leads to growth of the program
2. Emerging principles of collaboration with foreign partners as well as protocols and standards of digitization, coding of content and definitions of meta-tags & copyright issues.

# Thinking about evaluating your TICFIA grant

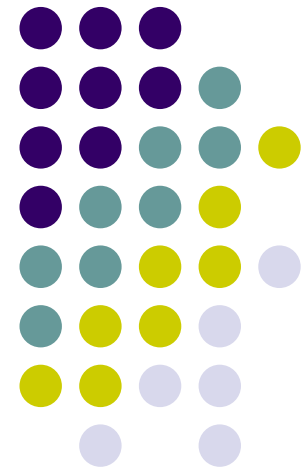


1. **WHY**: What is the evaluation's purpose?
2. **WHAT**: What data are needed and what methodology applies to gather and analyze them?
3. **HOW**: How will you present the results to those who need to know them?

# Thank you

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**More details found in:**



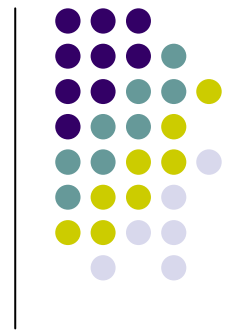
**Nitecki, D.A. (2004)**

**Program Evaluation in Libraries: Relating  
Operations and Clients.**

**Archival Science: International**

**Journal on Recorded Information,**

**4 (1-2) 17-44.**



# Practice designing TICFIA project evaluation



Discussion: What is the purpose of the evaluation and how might its statement be improved? Where does it fit in the matrix?

Small group review of illustrated statement:

- Pick one purpose and identify what data are needed to address it
- Identify what methodology is appropriate to gather and analyze them.
- How could the results be presented to be useful in addressing the evaluation purpose.