

evaluating capability maturity

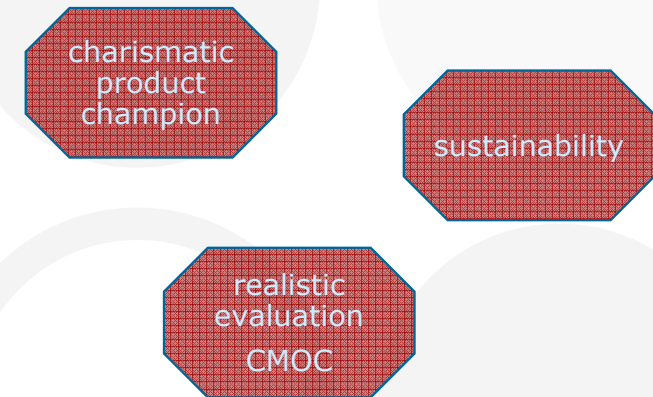
Presentation by
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why evaluate capability maturity?



One of the common program confounds, particularly in interventions with marginalised people, is the charismatic product champion. There are two components of this. One is the enthusiastic organiser who is the rolling snowball that gathers all in its path. The other is the person with unique qualities who makes something work. And there is the flip side of this coin - the program that is not working because it doesn't have the right people.

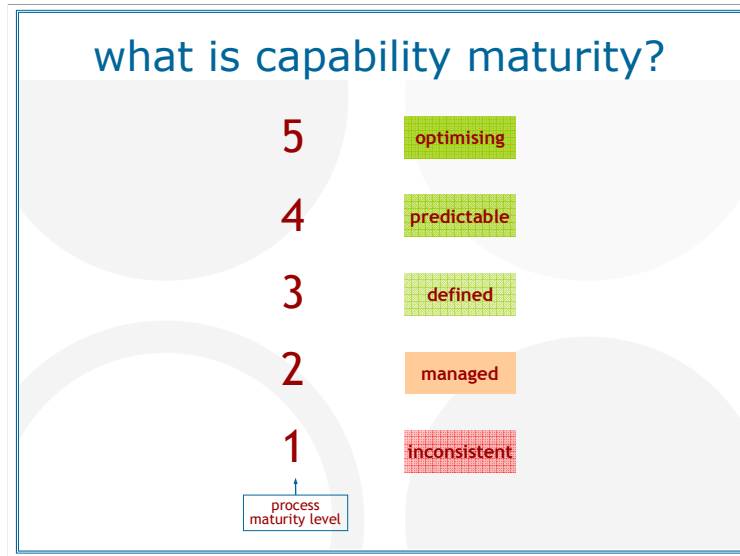
Sustainability is a very important issue, especially for continued funding.

Two examples.

1 - A local government organisation that received funding for a social program. The program stopped when the funding stopped. Somewhere in the funding equation sustainability missed out.

2 - swimming pools in local communities. NT example of the pool no longer used because they had fixed a leaking pipe with cement and the specialist plumber wasn't available

Realist evaluation (Pawson and Tilley) looks at context/mechanism/outcome configurations. The organisation is part of the context configuration - what may work with the organisation now make not work in the same way later.



History - 'process maturity' Humphrey early 1980s at IBM, observed that the quality of the software product depended on quality of process - but quality of process depended on maturity of organisation - the meta-process if you will. Lot of work at Carnegie-Mellon University, so much so that in the software engineering world it's called the Carnegie-Mellon Maturity Model.

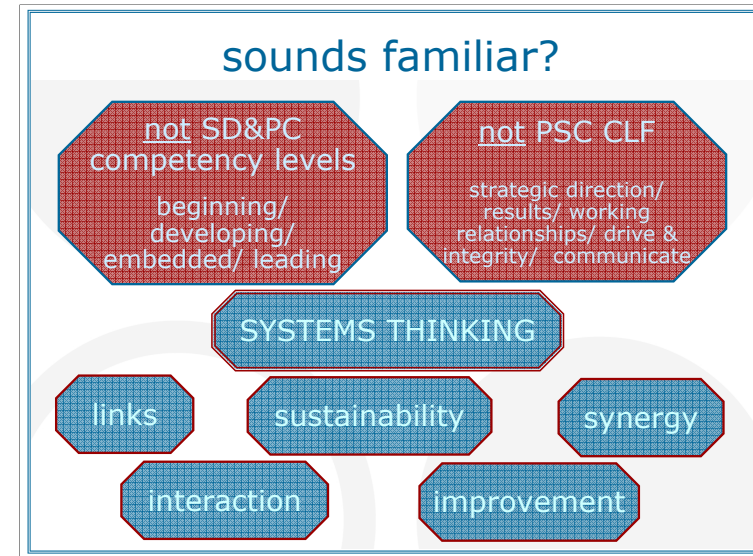
Inconsistent - processes are ad hoc, reinvented for each project, seems chaotic - can't improve if you can't repeat.

Managed - stable environment, repeatable processes

Defined - best practices are defined, integrated into common framework

Predictable - system is understood, can predict outcomes from modifications

Optimising - improving, empowering, changing



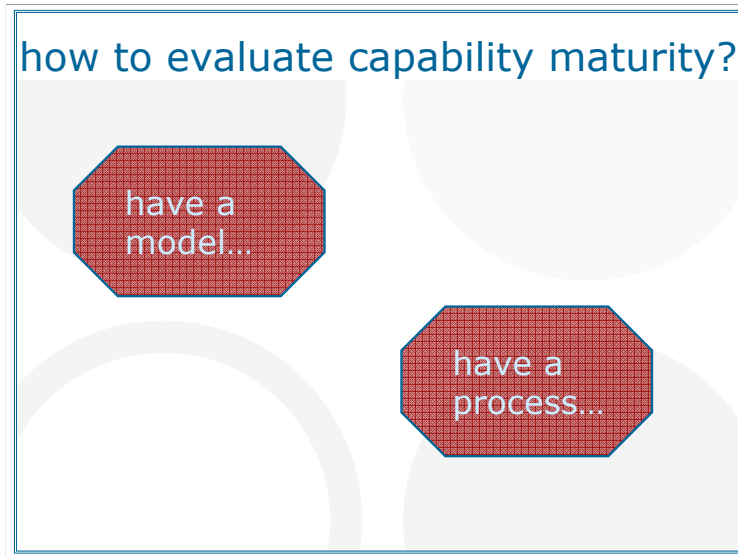
Not just a recasting of the erstwhile Service Delivery and Performance Commissions levels, which were actually more about competency than about capability.

Nor the recent Public Service Commission's Capability and Leadership Framework, which is an updating of what classification levels in the public service look like. But does contain the wonderfully circular definition of 'leadership', that it is "the approach taken ... in leading staff ... to achieve organisational goals." and that it is "a combination of personal, administrative and organisational change skills"

Capability maturity is about links, sustainability and synergy. It's about the bits working together coherently, and about interaction and improvement

In other words, systems thinking.

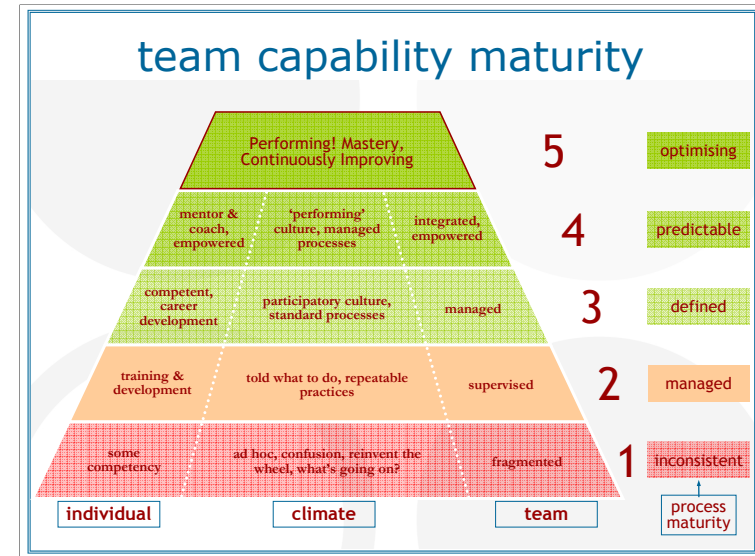
how to evaluate capability maturity?



need two things

- 1) a model for capability maturity
- 2) a process to apply that model

team capability maturity



The three elements of team capability are

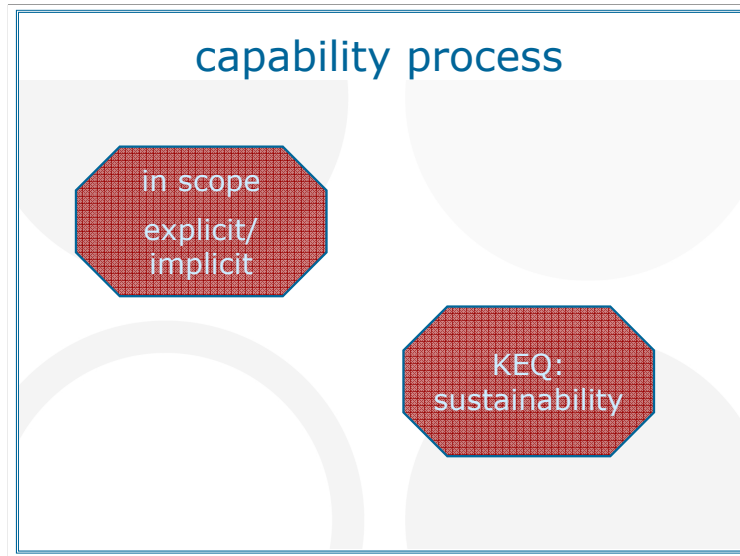
individual: the competencies and capacities, and the learning and growth, of the individuals within the team or organisation

climate: the climate/culture of the organisation: what it feels like to be around here, and how we do things around here

team: the nature of the team and its management and leadership

We can conceive of five levels of team capability maturity that mirror the five levels of process maturity.

While in theory an organisation could be at different levels for each element, in practice they are closely linked and mutually inter-dependent.



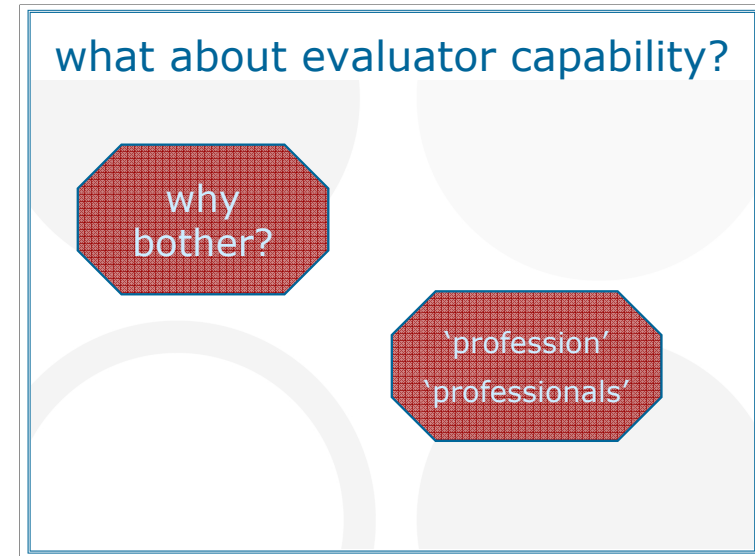
The question of 'how?' had a two-part answer 1) have a model, 2) have a process

The model is the easy bit.

My thoughts on the process are twofold.

Firstly, evaluating capability has to be 'in scope' either explicitly or implicitly. Questions of efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness are always in scope for an evaluation. If we accept the realist model of context, mechanism and outcomes, this means we are often saying this thing worked in this place at this time with this population, and delivered by this organisation. Just as we would make comment about the place, time, and population, so we should make comment about the organisation.

To this end we should add 'sustainability' as a KEQ for the very simple reason that knowing under what conditions the program effect can be sustained is a very important question.



why bother? supply side and demand side issues about quality and improvement. If the capability maturity is about links and sustainability then the conduct of evaluations, and the people or groups who do that should be looking at the same thing.

In my view evaluation suffers from high churn, and well-intentioned level 1/2 efforts.

When we talk about capability we can talk about the 'profession' of evaluation (deliberately in quotes because I question whether it meets the criteria for a profession) and evaluation 'professionals' (in quotes for the same reason).

Profession - specialised training or skills, accreditation, standards for membership of professional bodies, accepted by public as such, enforceable code

Nevertheless, in the path towards this, we should think about what we mean by evaluator capability...