

## SYSTEMS THINKING FOR EVALUATION PRACTICE

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Full day	Intermediate to advanced levels
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Systems thinking helps us as evaluators understand the world in all its diversity in ways that are practical, comprehensive, and wise. Many evaluators have a general interest in using systems concepts and approaches to make sense of the messy situations we often encounter in practice, but are uncertain how to begin when applying systems thinking to evaluation practice. This workshop bridges the systems and evaluation fields by teaching a basic toolbox of concepts for applying systems thinking to evaluation practice.

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce basic systems concepts needed to utilize systems thinking in evaluation practice; and to make concrete connections between systems concepts and the application of systems thinking to evaluation practice. It uses presentations, discussion and small group activities and includes handouts and links to on-line resources.

The main topics are:

1. What is systems thinking? – definitions and basics
2. Fundamental systems concepts – boundaries, perspectives, and relationships
3. Deep structures and mental models – capturing process, context, and complexity
4. Putting it all together – practical examples for using systems thinking in evaluation projects; using systems models to illustrate program theory

This workshop is targeted to intermediate/advanced evaluators who are not steeped in the work of systems but who are interested in learning how to use systems thinking in their work.

### BIO

Jan Noga is an independent consultant based in the Midwestern United States who has taught numerous workshops for non-profit, community, and government groups as well as graduate courses in systems thinking, research methods and techniques, grantsmanship, program planning and development, and survey design and analysis. As a program evaluator, Ms Noga has planned and conducted both large and small-scale evaluations and provided organizational consulting and capacity building support to clients in areas including systems thinking, logic modeling, performance measurement, and evaluation design and implementation. She is particularly interested in the use of systems theory and thinking as a foundation for planning, implementation, and evaluation of change efforts in the human service and education arenas.