Handouts for Today’s Session
June 8, 2022

The SPIN framework is designed to make evaluation clear and fun. You can use it to measure the impact of a specific program or service you offer, or to gauge your organization’s work as a whole. This framework enables you to blend in narratives, photos, diagrams, surveys, skill and knowledge tests, statistics, and other indicators of the impact you are making. Use these four components:

- **Stories** to describe how people experience and benefit from a program or initiative.
- **Pictures** to show what people are doing, where an issue is prominent, or how a natural or built environment is evolving thanks to a program or initiative.
- **Inventories** to assess and convey the degree to which audiences learn and apply concepts, or change their mindsets, perspectives, or behaviors.
- **Numbers** to indicate the level of audience involvement, social connection, socioeconomic engagement, financial results, or other impact.
Problem, Solution, and Impact

Do you ride a bike? When you roll your bike out of the garage, you might find that you must add air to your tires. Your tires need a high PSI level for you to glide smoothly toward your destination.\(^1\) Similarly, as you run your nonprofit, you need a high PSI to ride towards your vision:

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\begin{array}{ll}
\text{P} & \text{Understand the problem you’re solving.} \\
\text{S} & \text{Craft a solution to the problem.} \\
\text{I} & \text{Gauge the impact you are making.} \\
\end{array}
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“Fill the tires” for your nonprofit. A healthy PSI will help you reach your vision!

1. What is a community problem that your organization is trying to solve?

2. What is your theory about how to reduce or solve this problem?

3. What is an opportunity for your team to make a difference? Describe an opportunity your team is already pursuing or one you envision for the future.

4. What impact do you want your solution to make?

5. What products or services could your team provide to make this impact?

6. Suppose your clients have received/used these services or goods from your team. What would be some desirable outcomes for your clients?

\(^1\) PSI = Pounds per Square Inch of air in each tire.
Read & Reflect on Saehee’s Story
How Food Creates Communities
Words by George Upton. Photography by Justin Chung.
https://www.kinfolk.com/saehae-cho/
For Saehee Cho, a cook, writer and food stylist, food offers a unique way to bring people together—whether you’re reconciling generational divides, helping your community, or just making time to connect with friends over dinner. “There’s something so communicative about cooking for someone and having them eat your food,” she says.

Cho started cooking professionally while studying creative writing at the California Institute of the Arts, baking cakes for her classmates as a way to unwind. “When you come from an immigrant family in the U.S., you tend to bridge cultural gaps and language gaps with food,” she adds, referring to her own experience growing up within a Korean household in California. Her cakes led to her being hired by the university as a caterer, and to Cho subsequently spending more than a decade as a cook, catering for large groups of people as part of her artistic culinary project, Soo N.

When California was placed under lockdown during the pandemic, Cho drew from her experiences to launch an initiative called Soon Mini. At the start of the pandemic, Cho had been delivering meals to friends, but noticed that everyone had time on their hands to cook; what they were struggling with was sourcing good quality ingredients. Using her relationships with local farms, she began buying produce in bulk and distributing it herself.

What started as a simple way to help friends during the pandemic has quickly grown to become a pioneering non-profit. Cho now coordinates around 50 orders a week that are delivered by a network of volunteers. “Very little money has been exchanged,” Cho says of the generosity and the system of skill-sharing at the heart of the enterprise. “Instead, we’ve exchanged time, food, care and love. We created this small community based in food that feels very genuine and special. It’s like a family that’s just grown and grown.”

As well as making good quality produce accessible to consumers, Soon Mini has, in turn, established a platform for small businesses that humanizes supply chains. It’s a model that enables farms to sell direct to consumers and to grow crops that suit the climate and calendar, rather than be dictated to by restaurant groups. The project’s success owes much to the technology that’s available today. “It’s been a critical point for Soon Mini. We would never have been able to scale the operations without understanding how to build these different systems,” she says.

Unsurprisingly, running a non-profit food subscription service, on top of catering and food styling work, leaves Cho little time for herself. Still, she always makes time to cook for herself when she returns home—even if it’s 11 p.m. “I’ll come back from a styling gig and I won’t even want to look at food,” says Cho. “But being able to transform those materials into something for myself becomes a meditative practice, which is magical.”

“When you’re cooking for 40 people, and 40 plates have to come out hot at the same time, inevitably the love gets diffused,” she continues. “If it’s small group, though, I’m very intentional. I’m thinking about them as I cook, wishing them luck, and I guarantee it’s better than anything I make when I’m catering.”

*This story was created in partnership with Samsung as part of Slow Systems—a new series offering simple ideas for transforming everyday moments into more meaningful experiences.*
As well as supporting local farm communities through Soon Mini, Cho makes consistent donations to local charities like Black Visions Collective and the LA Food Bank.

To see this story with the accompanying layout and photos, visit https://www.kinfolk.com/saehee-cho/.
Reflect on Saehee’s Story

1. What makes Saehee’s story interesting to you?

2. What is the impact Saehee is making through her work?

3. What effect do the pictures have on you?

4. What further information do you wish this story provided?

5. If you were to create a profile for someone in your nonprofit, what story would you tell? What kinds of pictures would you take?
Take These Concepts Out for a SPIN

Consider how to apply SPIN to your direct service work.

1. Think of one pivotal moment one of your clients experienced in the past year. What was powerful about that moment?

2. What is this person’s name? What is his/her backstory (hometown, personality, family, occupation, hobbies, challenges, and dreams)?

3. What’s touching or striking about your relationship with this person?

4. What did you do for your client? What was the result for your client?

5. What effect has this person have on you? What did you learn?
6. If you were to represent this story with three pictures, what kinds of images would you show?

7. What are three specific skills, forms of knowledge, or new perspectives your client developed thanks to your work?

8. If you were to represent this story with three numbers, what kinds of numbers would you cite?

9. Build your SPIN team. Who could help you create the story, take pictures, learn how your client has progressed, or gather numbers about the impact you’ve made?
It’s Just Like a Movie!

Now let’s use SPIN to look at something your nonprofit has done to strengthen its own capabilities. Perhaps your team has invested in new software, completed a professional development course, or run a marketing campaign.

1. What is one internal initiative you’d like to evaluate through SPIN?

2. Think of this initiative as a movie. What’s the plot: a challenge to overcome, a crisis to survive, an opportunity to pursue?

3. Who were the good guys and bad guys?

4. What surprises surfaced along the way?

5. By the end of this movie, what had you won and lost?
6. Who were the heroes of the story?

7. Suppose you’re the director of this movie. What were the key scenes? Where did they happen? What effects did the setting, equipment, or other tactile elements have on the success of your initiative?

8. How did your cast members evolve over the course of shooting your movie? Did they become better at emphasizing with fellow characters? Did they improve their physical fitness? Did they learn something crucial about the theme of your initiative?

9. What did it cost to run this initiative – to produce this movie? What were the box office returns? Did this movie make as much of an impact on your audience as you’d wished?

Learn More

To learn more about the SPIN framework, contact its creator, Bryan Richards, at (317) 826-8520 or bryan@aspenimpact.com.