



GOODMAN RESEARCH GROUP, INC. PERSPECTIVES

Evaluation and Research News From Cambridge, MA

Summer 2005

Greetings from the President



Change is a key motif of this issue. Change is a complex notion that can refer to something gradual or sudden, and it can be positive, negative, or neutral. Because our business requires a fine balancing act between numbers of staff and scope/

numbers of projects, I have always taken the view that very gradual growth is most prudent.

At GRG, we have been spared change of the more cataclysmic variety, but we still have changes of significance to report. Some of our growth is due to taking on new projects in areas of health, medical education, humanities, and the arts, while some growth involves expanding our geographic reach, changes in office scenery, and changes in staff.

In September 2004, we opened a second office in Los Angeles, California. As a native Angeleno, for some time I had envisioned our company establishing a corporate presence on the west coast. This past fall, the timing was right, and Elizabeth Bachrach—who has been a project manager at GRG for five years—agreed to blaze the path out there. Happily, since that expansion, we have had a number of clients in California wanting to use our evaluation research services.

In March 2005, we moved GRG headquarters to new premises. Our quarter-mile move from the old office in Harvard Square has been an extremely positive change for us. It's nice to be within a stone's throw of both Harvard and Central Squares, and our office is much newer, more spacious, and certainly more serene than our old one. It has given us room to breathe—and space for activities such as focus groups and concurrent group meetings. We hope you will visit.

In terms of staff changes, two of our stellar research assistants, Dreolin Fleischer and Claire Brown, are leaving at the end of the summer to pursue further education, after several

years at GRG. We will be sad to see them go, but we know that moving on is part of a natural growth cycle. We are bringing on two newly minted baccalaureates, who will join Jennie Murack as research assistants.

We are also expanding our staff, having just hired a new project manager who will add to our research capabilities. Senior staffer Colleen Manning is returning to her role as GRG director of research, having worked part-time at GRG these past two years while a doctoral candidate in Public Policy at UMass-Boston. Karen Peterman has recently been promoted to Senior Research Associate.

In many ways, then, change is the order of the day at GRG at this juncture in our history. Of course, the measurement of change is central to GRG's professional concerns. Our clients' organizations develop programs that they hope effect change in their target audiences. GRG encourages them to employ various research tools up front that will help them to design and implement effective programs.

These include theories of change (TOC) and logic models, which have been used interchangeably but focus on different approaches to improving programs. See the page 3 article in this newsletter by Karen Peterman about using these models to chart the conceptual development of a program. In addition, good web resources are www.theoryofchange.org and www.unitedway.org (see their Outcome Measurement Resource Network).

Making change is serious business, but may the changes your organization strives for be leavened with humor.

Irene F. Goodman, Ed. D.
Founder and President

