



Nick Stilp, M.S.

Senior Consultant, The Improve Group

Nick's passion for understanding behavior and human psychology has led him to appreciate the difficulty of effective decision-making; this drives him as he instills clarity and helps leaders make well-informed, data-driven decisions. It's Nick's personal belief that every day should be celebrated like a Friday, and that mentality is evident in the way he approaches work.

Expertise

Evaluation

Nick is experienced in every stage of the evaluation process, from careful design and data collection to thoughtful analysis and insightful reporting. He is particularly skilled at asking the right questions to inform effective evaluations and uncover unexpected solutions; designing highly graphic reports with a focus on increasing use; and using a keen eye for data visualization to bring results to life. Nick practices community responsive approach to evaluation through consideration for how affected communities and stakeholders can most benefit from each project.

Consulting

Nick is quick to build quality working and personal relationships with clients. Nick's flexible work style adapts to fit the preferences of others, and his mindful approach to communication leads to strong stakeholder relationships. His interpersonal aptitude coupled with strong project management skills are a recipe for success in the fast-paced consulting environment.

Strategic Planning

Nick is trained and skilled at using the Technology of Participation (ToP)® method for strategic planning as a framework; he then uses his expertise to propose modifications based on a client's specific goals and needs. Nick pays extra attention to the focused implementation phase to create clear action plans and ensure metrics are in place that will allow clients to measure a strategic plan's success over time. He is also skilled at designing 1- or 2-pagers that synthesize lengthy workshop documentation into a usable, shareable format.

Facilitation

As a facilitator, Nick creates a comfortable environment and effectively manages group dynamics to ultimately pull the best insights from groups. He designs facilitation to be engaging, including in virtual environments, and takes time to build rapport with participants before workshops to secure buy-in. Drawing on his high energy and positive mindset, Nick facilitates in a way that makes all feel engaged and as though their insights matter.

Professional Experience

The Improve Group | St. Paul, MN | Senior Consultant | 2020-present | Plans, leads, and implements project activities to make the most of information, navigate complexity, and ensure clients' investments of time and money lead to meaningful, sustained impact. Project experience includes:

Leading a community needs assessment for the Animal Humane Society to understand the needs of unhoused and low-income pet owners in the Twin Cities.

Leading Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development's process and workflow improvement project to identify areas for improved collaboration and coordination in bridging business development and workforce strategies. This project includes conducting key informant interviews and business development workshops.

Supporting workshop facilitation for MDA Retail Food Program staff and Manufactured Food Program staff to plan and shape how their programs implement MDA-wide strategic goals.

Leading an evaluation of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge to understand the engagement traditionally underrepresented groups, including BIPOC, Somali, and Latine communities have with the refuge. The project involves logic modeling sessions and designing data collection methods such as surveys for event participants and a feedback survey for interns with the refuge.

Partnering with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture on a strategic planning process to ensure a federal food safety rule impacting produce growers and handlers statewide was implemented in a culturally responsive and equitable way.

Facilitating process mapping workshops to help the Saint Paul Foundation clarify the position of its Community Sharing Fund in the larger landscape of programs that provide emergency assistance to people with immediate needs. This helped the Foundation improve its internal processes and incorporate the input of case managers, who apply for emergency funding on behalf of clients.

Working with a foundation client to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of a school district-wide social worker expansion program pilot to help students and their families access support and resources.

The Improve Group | St. Paul, MN | Associate Consultant | 2017-2020 | Worked collaboratively with project teams to execute activities.

University of Wisconsin-Stout | Menomonie, WI | Graduate Assistant | 2016-2017 | Served as a Teaching Assistant for a Graduate-level Program Evaluation Course, overseeing and collaborating with four evaluation teams to develop survey instruments, collect and analyze data, and deliver high-impact projects for various stakeholders.

Valley Popcorn | Neenah, WI | Research Analyst, Customer Analysis | 2016 | Developed a survey, collected and analyzed data on more than 1,000 customers, and developed a report as part of a project to educate the company on how to make data-driven decisions.

West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency | Menomonie, WI | Program Evaluator | 2015-2016 | Led administration of a mixed methods needs assessment, analyzed survey data, and created a full report and data visualization of results to inform the agency on low-income populations across seven Wisconsin counties.

Education

University of Wisconsin-Stout | Master of Science in Applied Psychology

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse | Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Training

Technology of Participation® Facilitation Methods | Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A.

Technology of Participation® Participatory Strategic Planning | Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A.

Microsoft Access training levels 1-3

Tableau 101 Training

Professional Affiliations

American Evaluation Association

Minnesota Evaluation Association