Applying Policy Analysis to the Decisionmaking Process

SF LGBT Aging Policy Task Force

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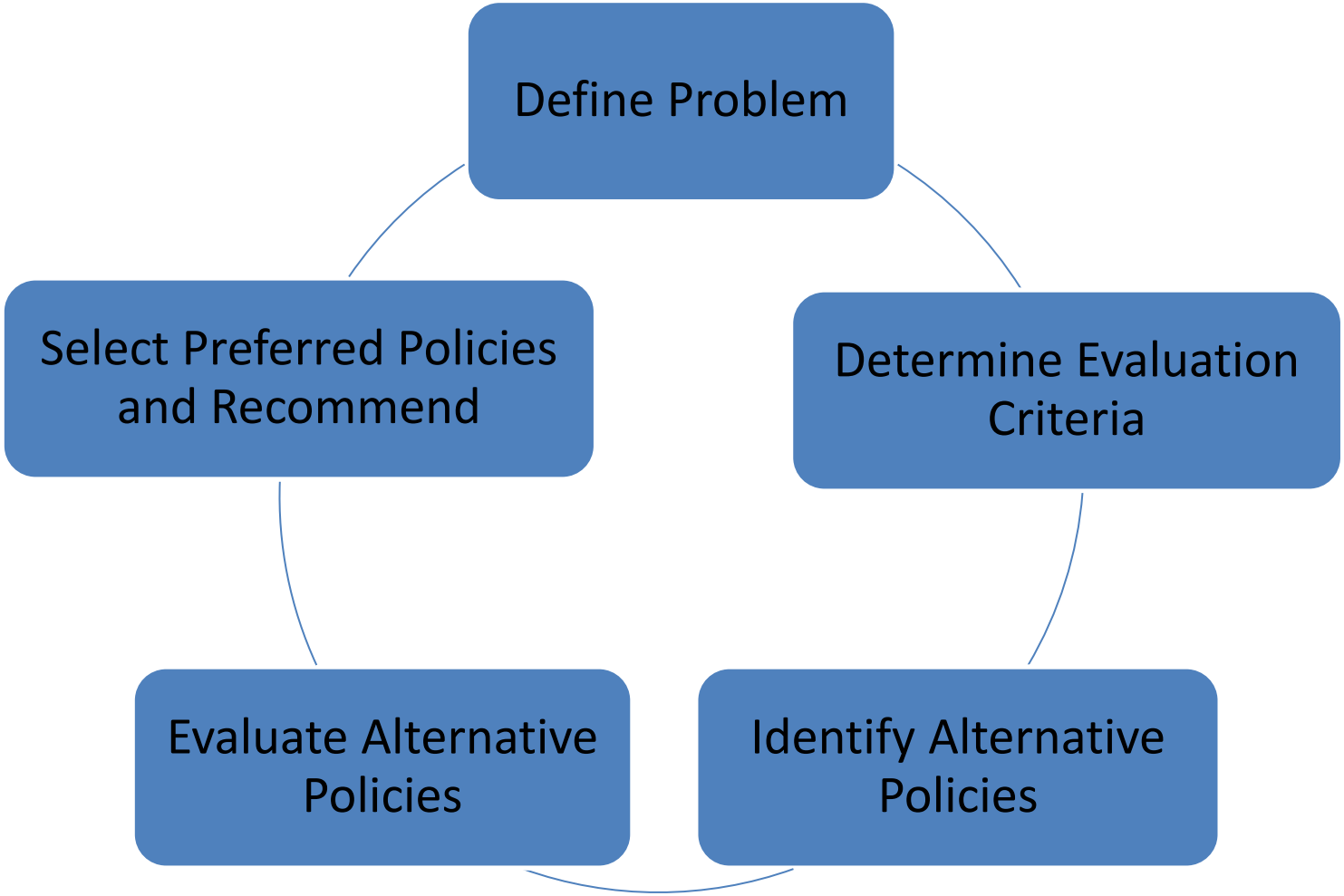
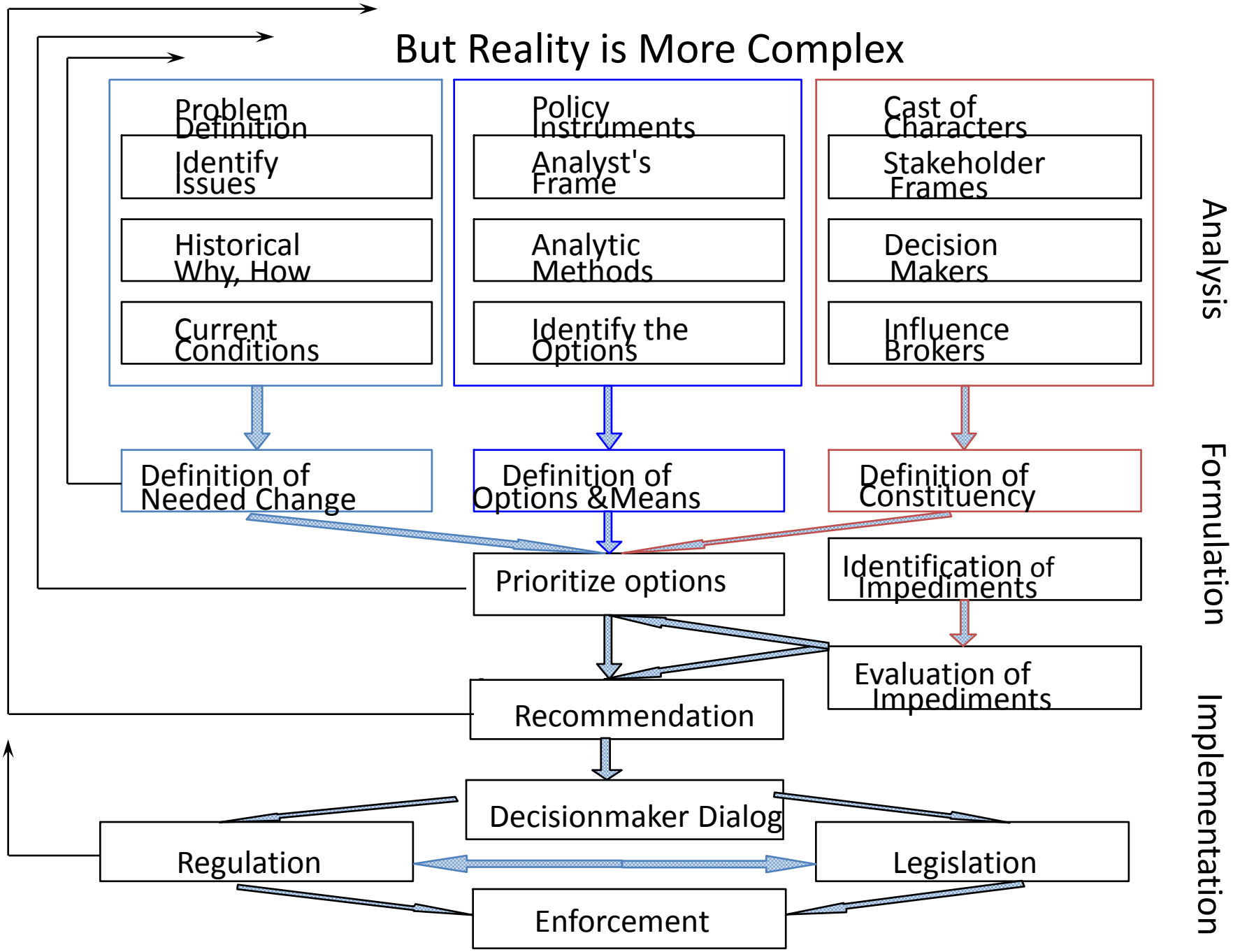
Basic Approach to Decision Making



But Reality is More Complex

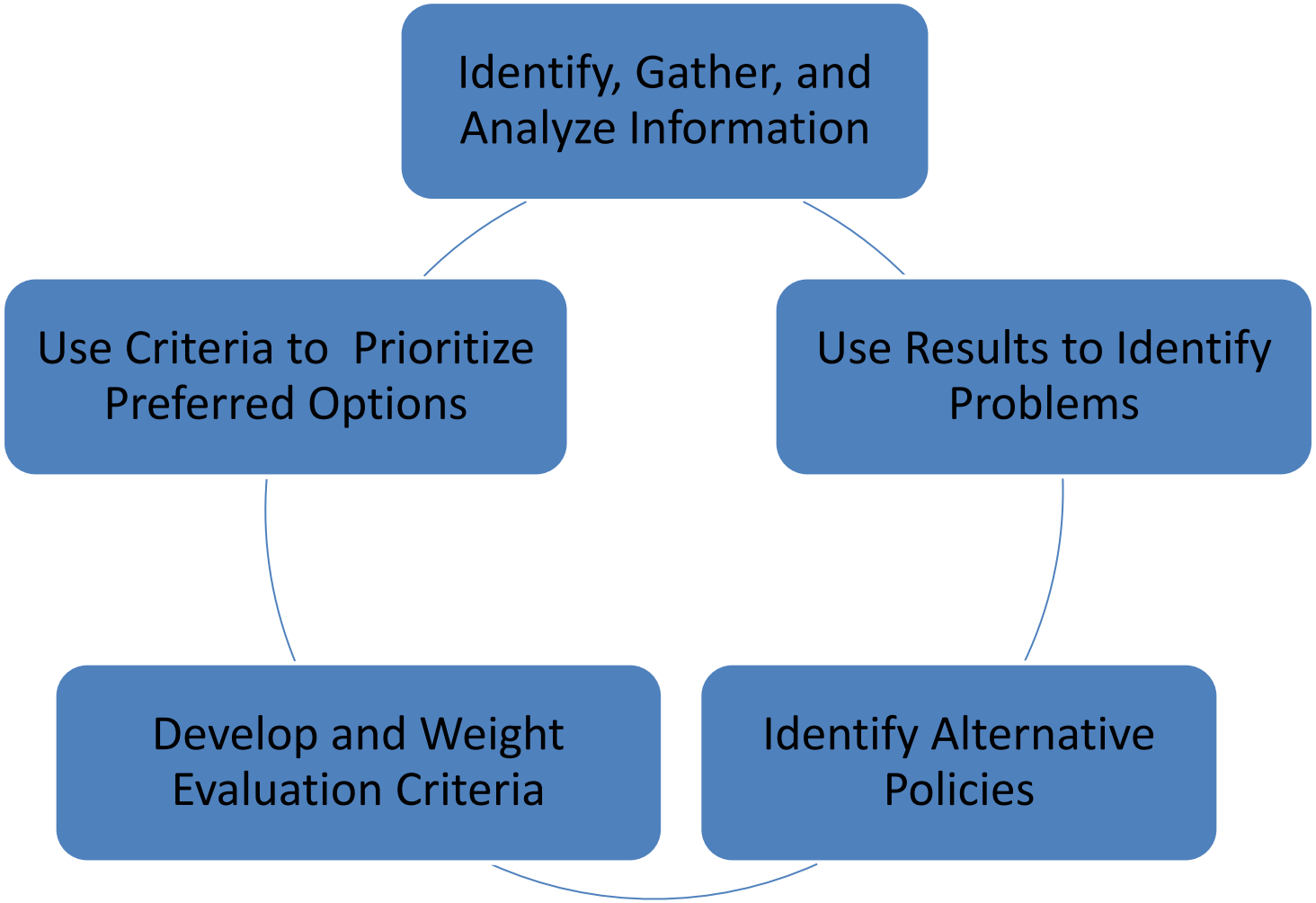


Policy Analysis Developed to Supplement Public Administration

- Public Administration developed early 20th century to:
  - Manage public organizations, including human resources, operations, external relations, finance, other functions
  - Develop and implement policies, projects, and programs addressing policy problems
  - Reference Points: Organizational Design/ Management/Public Finance/Political Context
  - MPA, MHA, MBA

- Policy Analysis developed late 20th century to:
  - Focus on gathering and processing information to develop and assess options addressing public policy problems
  - Evaluate existing programs by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data
  - Reference Points: Economics, Social Science, Quantitative Analysis
  - MPP, M Applied Econ/Stats

Policy Analysis Informs Decisionmaking in Complex Environments



Examples of Evaluation Criteria

- Economic efficiency — benefits and costs.
- Distributional equity — how option impacts are distributed among different demographics.
- Social/Cultural acceptability — extent to which option may be supported/opposed by current social norms, cultural values, or interest groups
- Operational and Fiscal practicality — the capacity necessary to actually operationalize the option.
- Legal and Political viability — the potential for the option to be enacted and implemented
- Uncertainty — the degree to which the level of impacts associated with the option can be known

Data Gathering and Analyzing Tools

Examples:

- Quantitative and Qualitative Studies
  - Use social science methodologies
  - Can generate original data (e.g. surveys) or summarize existing information (e.g.meta-analyses)
- Trade off Analyses (Multiple Criteria Evaluation)
- Program Evaluation of Existing Programs
- Benefit Cost Analyses
- Economic and Actuarial Impact/Modeling
- Operations Research

What's used in SF?

Subject	Survey/ Meta-Analysis	Program Evaluation	Benefit Cost Analyses	Economic Impact
Biotech Payroll Tax Exclusion 5 yr study				X
Formula Retail Impacts on Business	X			
Business Taxes/Fees	X			
Minimum Wage		X		
Affordable Housing		X		
Youth MUNI Fares			X	
Americas Cup			X	
Aging in Place	X			
Nightlife Business				X
Same Sex Marriage				X

Next Steps For Taskforce?

- Choose the tools
- Gather and analyze the data
- Define the problem/further articulate the problem
- Identify policy options
- Develop evaluative criteria and apply to options
- Make recommendations