

10 Tips To Turn Assessment into Action

April 22, 2014
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Santa Barbara
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Outcomes

- Articulate the barriers to improving policy and practice from assessment results
- Articulate tips for turning assessment into action

Use of Results

- “Assessment information is of little use if it is not shared with appropriate audiences and used in meaningful ways” (Palomba & Banta, 1999)
- Assessment is not useful unless it leads to change
- If you collect assessment data, but don’t use it are you really doing assessment?

Stories From The Front

- Describe a time when assessment results were not used.



1. Don't Assess If No Interest

- What is interesting to you, may not be to others
- Curiosity is not a good enough reason for assessment
- Some projects may be low on the agenda



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2. Don't Assess If It Won't Be Addressed

- While a project may be important, there may be competing priorities
- Institution may not want to know results of assessment
- There may not be enough resources to make improvements based on the assessment



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3. Make A New Plan Stan

- Turning assessment into action can't be haphazard
- Think of yourself as a change agent
- Need a plan for every step of the change process, not just assessment



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4. The Nimble Bird Gets The Worm

- Projects you think are important now, could be important to others in the future
- Have a tentative assessment plan ready if a project moves up the agenda
- The more prepared you are with solutions to problems, the better chance your solution will be used



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5. Produce a Worthy Product

- Worthy study and worthy report
- A well implemented assessment study will garner respect
- A poor study will reduce credibility and support now and in the future



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7. Be One With The Audience

- Your audience is key to moving forward after your assessment
- What information do they need to know, what format should it be, and when do they need to know it
- May need multiple reports for multiple audiences
- Have dissemination plan



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6. Get the Right People On the Bus AND in the Right Seats

- Who are your stakeholders
 - Internal
 - Mixternal
 - External
- Which stakeholders need to be on the bus, which ones can wave goodbye when you leave, which ones should say hello when your bus arrives
- For those on the bus, who should drive, navigate, sit up front, or sit in the back
- Send dispatches to those at bus stations



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8. Show Me the Money

- Fold results into planning discussions
- Establish and promulgate funding priorities that are tied to institutional/unit-level plans
- Give funding priority to resource requests supported by assessment evidence
- Give funding priority to pervasive rather than isolated problems
- Move programs engaging in serious assessment efforts to the top funding list



Adapted from Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Pp. 304-306

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9. All Politics Is Local

- Remember that all data is political
- Decide the implications for sharing any type of data
 - Will the data impact image?
 - Will solutions be expected?
 - Will people/offices feel judged?

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Reflection Pause

- Any comments or questions to this point?



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10. It Takes A Village to Raise a Recommendation

- Need to get other folks invested in a recommendation to make it successful
- People need to see themselves or their department in the recommendation and feel some ownership in it
- Were village sages on the bus, at the station, or at home watching Jeopardy?



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Conclusion



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