The Drive to Create an Assessment Plan: A Department Head’s Roadmap

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Place of Origin:
In a world where middle managers are caught between a rock (administration) and a hard place (department), how does a new department head make progress?

Landscape:
• Adriana: New department head, tasked to write a departmental strategic plan...
• Leo: New department head, tasked to reimagine an education library...

Route for the department:
1. Start Small
• Gives individuals opportunities to try assessment with low stakes involved
• Gives individuals a quick return, motivating them to continue assessing
• Gives individuals insight to skills or tools

2. Offer Training
• Gives individuals opportunity to gain basic knowledge of assessment
• Instills confidence
• Equip's individuals with ability to ask the right questions to get the right answers

3. Utilize In-House Resources
• Identifies individuals in library or campus with relevant assessment skills
• Creates opportunities to form collaborative partnerships
• Reduces need and cost of using outside experts

Destination: Culture of Assessment

Start Small

Utilize In-House Resources

Offer Training

Risks of Data-driven Management:
• May be giving up “authority”
• Time consuming
• Requires emotional detachment (removes “gut” instinct)

Journey to Date:
• Began with a small project: assessment of the study habits of graduate students to improve the dedicated graduate student study rooms; provided with a quick turn around, and implemented small changes
• Utilized in-house expertise from assessment librarian in developing projects
• 4 of 8 librarians currently working on assessment projects, varying in length, time, and topic
• Variety of assessment instruments are being used to explore assessing less traditional areas, such as distance education, graduate student/personal librarian instruction model
• Looking to invite an assessment expert for professional development opportunity
• Overall direction of department head is being supported through these various projects leading to a more complete, focused and complete assessment plan

Reaching the Final Destination:
• Assessment becomes automatic
• Assessment is integrated into all plans or ideas
• Results are reviewed, and analyzed with the goal to take action
• Data-driven decisions are made
• Assess changes that are made
• Continue cycle of assessment