Overview

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Overview

Intent & Purpose
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Intent & Purpose

To share a set of training materials that:

1. Reviews the principles and practices of library assessment
2. Enables library workers to develop skills to assess a program or service
3. Is modular and easy to follow
4. Can be self-paced or used as a training guide for collaborative efforts
5. Supports a community of learning
Definitions

**Evaluation**—the process of:

- Determining the quality of a library’s services, resources, or spaces
- Gauging user satisfaction with the library’s services, resources, or spaces
- Focusing on managerial decision-making

**Assessment**—the process of:

- Measuring or judging progress toward a goal or outcome
- Focusing on the impact of a library’s services, collections, or facilities
- Having a goal of continuous improvement
Definitions

• **Reflective practice**: the commitment to continuous learning to enact improvement and alignment with user needs

• **Evidence-based librarianship**: the use of research data and evidence in professional practice to make informed decisions

• **Accountability**: the process of providing stakeholders with evidence of quality, improvement, and progress toward mission and goals
Goals of Assessment

To **include others** as co-creators of change, **pursue continuous improvement**, **make decisions**, **take action**, and share the results with others in an effort to achieve equity, engagement, and excellence.

To better understand the library’s users and community as well as its services, resources, and spaces and to make informed decisions for continuous improvement.

To systematically ask for and collect feedback to be sure the wants and needs of the library user community are understood, as well as the library’s impact on the community.

To produce the data needed to guide library decisions (e.g., resource allocations, staffing, innovation); continue to improve services, resources, and spaces; and provide evidence of library value.

All decisions made should be **evaluated in the next cycle**.
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Assessment Cycle

1. Choosing a focus and setting goals
2. Making decisions
3. Sharing results
4. Revisiting goals
5. Gathering and analyzing data
Choosing a Focus and Setting Goals

• Determine what **questions** need to be answered.

• Determine what the **goals** are.

• Define **aspects** of services, resources, or spaces to study.

• Knowing the goals helps determine the assessment data and methods.
Gathering and Analyzing Data

• Collect the **data**.
• Use appropriate **methods**.
  – What method will yield the type and extent of data needed?
• **Review** the data.
• **Analyze** the data.
• **Determine the meaning** of the data.
Making Decisions, Sharing Results, and Revisiting Goals

• Make **decisions** and take **actions** (or decide not to act).

• **Communicate** to user and stakeholder groups.

• Restart the cycle.
Pragmatism

- Incorporate discoveries from action
- Reflect on past experiences & interpret environment
- Build knowledge through experimentation
- Engage in inquiry to reduce doubt
- Use reasoning to create new rules for action
Information Literacy
(broadly construed)

Evaluate research product → Formulate a research question
→ Find sources that help answer the question
→ Appraise (evaluate) the sources
→ Apply information gleaned from sources
Information Literacy Instruction Assessment Cycle

1. Gather data to check for learning
2. Interpret data
3. Enact decisions to increase learning
4. Identify learning outcomes
5. Create and enact learning activities

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General Process for Library Assessment

- Begin with a question to answer or need to fulfill.
- Consider the problem area that the question/need represents.
- Attempt to locate the problem in a larger theoretical framework, if one exists.
- Develop a plan for attempting to learn more about and resolve the problem (i.e., select a method and overall design for data collection).
- Gather data needed to solve or better understand the problem, organize it, and analyze it. Determine whether results are sufficiently meaningful, accurate, unbiased, and valid to merit action.
- If information is sufficient, act on improved understanding to make decisions toward solving the problem.
- If information is insufficient, develop new questions or refine the process to address insufficiency in future cycles.

Five Modules of the Research and Assessment Cycle Toolkit

- Identify
- Articulate
- Collect
- Organize & Analyze
- Act
Identify

- Discovering what you need to know
- Articulating why you need to know it
- Anticipating how knowing will lead to action
Articulate

• Identifying research questions
• Constructing user stories
• Composing hypotheses
Collect

• Identifying potential data, evidence, and input
• Considering methods
• Considering your sample

• Conducting interviews
• Conducting focus groups
• Conducting participatory research
• Conducting observational research
• Conducting surveys
Organize and Analyze

• Cleaning and organizing quantitative data
• Analyzing quantitative data
• Using Excel and Google Sheets to visualize data
• Using Tableau to visualize data
Act

• Reflecting on results

• Communicating results
  – Identifying audiences and messages
  – Sharing results with stakeholders

• Realizing outcomes
Materials

• Videos
• Handouts
• External links
• Feedback forms
Overview

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