



A "culture of assessment"? Or an "assessment-minded culture"?

Key Project Details

- New Assessment Coordinator position in 2018
- Land and Space Grant, R1 institution. Approximately 90 employees overall
- Tasked with defining, developing, and maintaining a "culture of assessment"
- I identified several projects that would, in theory, address the goal. Mixed results followed

Complications

1. Preconceived notions about what "cultures of assessment" could solve contributed to difficulties
2. A lack of agreement on several key details about assessment delayed project implementation
3. Staff did not see assessment as important
4. Lack of buy-in = a lack of enthusiasm. Assessment was a chore rather than a useful tool

Central Issue/Problem/Challenge

1. Not having established best assessment practices or a "culture of assessment" was used to rationalize why projects and initiatives across the Library had been failing.
2. Library staff could not agree on several key details about cyclical assessment practices that could, in theory, cultivate a "culture of assessment."
3. Practicing assessment was always the least important task in everyone's work plan.
4. Buy-in for assessment initiatives was already low prior to the position being formed.

Lessons/Ideas/Questions

1. While the library asked for firmly established assessment practices, guidelines, and processes (formally named a "culture of assessment"), their workflows could not accommodate it.
2. What we really needed were tools and skillsets to reframe their already existing practices to be assessment-minded.
3. Organically grown, assessment-minded tools were more effective and used more frequently than anything else I did that was "forced"

Questions for the Audience:

- What has your experience been with building a "culture of assessment?" What challenges have you faced?
- What would/does effective assessment look like at your institution?
- What are your thoughts on a "culture of assessment" vs. an "assessment-minded culture"?