

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
- Equips 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

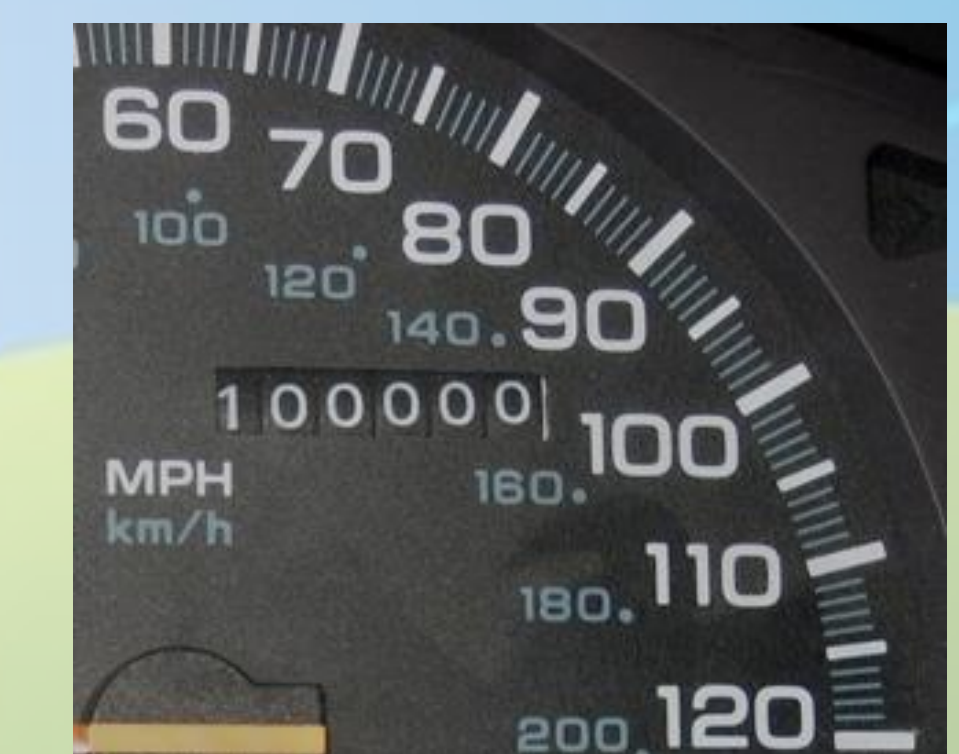
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Risks of Data-driven Management:

- 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