Planning Objectives: Writing Objectives, Selecting Measures, & Analyzing Results

EKU

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Contents

Strategic Planning Process Highlights

- Develop Plan
- Implement Plan
- Collect Assessment Data
- Analyze & Evaluate Results
- Modifications for continuous improvement

What is assessment as it pertains to us and our roles?

- Nichols: "Assessment in service units relates to measuring the effectiveness of units specifically organized for the provision of service to clientele."
- A way of determining if units are achieving what they say they will in our mission and objectives
- A means of making sure we're doing what we say we will as a university
- Proving to ourselves and important others that we are accomplishing our purposes
- A way to improve services.

Documenting and using the assessment results is key

- Nichols: "The end result of the assessment activities…is the improvement of unit services as reflected by a documented and systematic process whereby assessment activities have led to service improvements in educational support and administrative units."
- The purpose of assessment is to gather information to use for decision-making
- *Assessment Isn't* ***Done*** *Unless It's Documented and Used For Improvement!!!*

What are the key questions assessment of planning objectives should answer?

- Are processes effective?
- Are the processes/services doing what they are supposed to be doing?
- How can processes be improved?

Use of Assessment Findings

- **Internal**
  - Provide direction for staff
  - Boost morale of staff
  - Identify training needs
  - Improve programs
  - Supports annual and long-range planning
  - Guide budgets and justify resource allocations
  - Revamp mission/vision statement – if necessary
  - Drop ineffective efforts
  - Identify staffing short falls
  - Educate participants or customers
  - Target those you are not reaching

- **External**
  - Message to University about your work
  - Enhance the program's public image
  - Retain and increase funding
  - Recruit talented staff
  - Promote the program to potential participants

Types of Changes From Assessment Activities

- Organizational Changes
- Allocation of Current Resources
- Changes in Procedures
- Relations with other units
- Changes in Assessment Procedures
- Assessment Results as Justification for Additional Resources

adapted from Nichols and Nichols, 2000

Part 1: Writing Planning Objectives

Defining Objectives

- Objectives are statements of end results; state the specific activities or specific results to be achieved.

- A clear statement of objectives serves as the foundation for the entire plan -
  - shaping the kinds of questions you will ask,
  - shaping the assessment methods you will employ,
  - determining how useful your assessment results are for making changes.

Planning versus Student Learning Objectives

- *Student Learning Objectives*—the focus of the objective is on “student learning”
  - Defined in terms of: knowledge, skill, ability, value

- *Planning Objectives*—the focus is on administrative outcomes within the department; those things other than student learning that the department is currently working on.

Questions That Help Identify Objectives

- Questions to help explain the office:
  - Who are your office’s clients/customers/participants/members/service recipients/intended beneficiaries?
  - What services does your office provide to these individuals? What activities does it do with them or on their behalf?

Questions That Help Identify Objectives

- Questions to help clarify functional logic and identify objectives:
  - Why do you provide those services?
  - What do you expect will happen as a result?
  - What change do you think these activities will bring about for clients?
  - If that change occurs, then what will it lead to?
  - Why do you want that change to happen?

Defining Process-, Outcome-, and Satisfaction-Oriented Planning Objectives

- *Process-Oriented*—relate to what the unit intends to accomplish and frequently describes a) level of volume of unit activity b) the efficiency with which the unit's processes are conducted, or c) compliance with external standards of "good practice in the field" or regulations.

- *Outcome-Oriented*—concern the ability of clients after services have been provided by the unit

- *Satisfaction-Oriented*—client satisfaction (overall – components of services)

Examples of Planning Objectives

- Outcome Objectives
  - Faculty will be able to use instructional media based upon equipment and training provided by Media Resources.
  - Staff will utilize the Human Resources on-line query system to trace their employment requests
  - Parents will recognize the importance of student immunizations.
- Process Objectives
  - Library will be efficient in book acquisitions.
  - The number of workshops provided by the Career Center will increase.
  - Accounting Office will promptly process vendor statements.
- Satisfaction Objectives
  - Students will be satisfied with Library circulation services.
  - Vendors will report prompt payment.

adapted from Nichols and Nichols, 2000

Administrative Unit Assessment Model (handout)

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
Resources	**Services**	**Products**	▪All goods, services and supplies procured effectively, efficiently and in a cost-conscious manner.
▪Money	▪Process Payments	▪Payments processed	
▪Staff	▪Send Bills	▪Bills sent	
▪Equipment & supplies	▪Secure Procurement Contracts	▪Contracts secured	▪Contracts for procurement developed as needed and conform to State policies and procedures.
Constraints	▪Procure goods, supplies and services	▪Goods, services and supplies procured	
▪Laws	▪Process Resumes	▪Resumes processed	
▪Regulations	▪Prepare financial statements	▪Financial statements prepared	▪Provide monthly financial reports by object of expenditure and remaining balances to departments
		▪Positions filled	
	▪Process Staff Employment Requests	▪Staff employment requests processed	▪Staff use HR online query system to trace their employment requests.

Examples of Planning Objectives

- Institutional Research will create a QuickFacts booklet to enhance ease of use of university information by fall 2011.
- Academic Advising will develop an academic advising model for undeclared students in order to assist students with declaring a major.
- Billings & Collections will decrease the number of customer complaints by 5% to enhance customer satisfaction.

Planning Objectives Guidelines

- Planning Objectives should be:
  - Linked to the unit's mission and EKU's purpose
  - Realistic
  - Limited in number
  - Measurable
  - Focus on the "why" of the objective.
    - For example: "Implement new production database to enhance workflow, pricing and information retrieval.

Part 2: Assessment Measures

Assessment Measures (Key Performance Indicators)

- The specific items of information that track an office’s successes on an objective.
  - Assessment Measures provide us with data that allow us to evaluate progress towards an objective
  - Identify the characteristic or change that signals that an objective has been achieved.
  - Provide enough information to use for making improvements.

Questions to ask when choosing assessment measures

- How will I know if this objective is being accomplished?
- What will provide me this information?
- Will the resulting data provide information that could lead to improvement of our services?
- What measures are currently available? Will something need to be developed?
- Is one measure sufficient or should I have more?

Assessment Measures

Make sure your assessment methods:

- answer questions that are important to you
- are manageable, given available resources (including time and money)
- result in useful feedback that highlights accomplishments and identifies areas requiring attention.

Characteristics of an Effective Assessment Measure

- **Measurable**-We can observe it, count it, weigh it.
- **Actionable**-If a concern is identified we can do something to address it.
- **Unambiguous**-It is specific enough that we'd all agree on it if we saw it.
- **Meaningful**-It captures enough of the essential components of the objective to represent it adequately. If we saw it, we'd agree that the objective has been achieved.
- **Timely**-It is likely to occur within the designated time frame and/or to occur often enough to be useful.
- **Unbiased**-It does not work to the advantage or disadvantage of this client group or this situation.
- **Acceptable**-The key stakeholders accept this as a description of what the objective looks like when it occurs.
- **Manageable**-It can be measured without excessive cost or effort.

Types of Assessment Measures

- Counts and ratios
- Surveys (attitudinal assessment)
- Focus Groups
- Informal one-on-one meetings with key clients
- External Evaluation (Ex: Fire Marshal’s report following inspection of facilities)
- Analysis of service use
- Outputs per budget $ calculations
- Observations

Examples of Measures of Effectiveness

Admissions	Telephone Response Timing
Business Affairs	Monitoring Grants & Contracts
Campus Security	Availability of Parking
Development	Mailing List Development
Networking	Number of new equipment
Physical Operations	Work Order Response
Physical Plant	Remodeling Processes
Printing Services	Bulk Mail Distribution
Printing Services	Reduction of Pre-Press Time
Registrar's Office	Clearing Transcript Holds

adapted from Nichols and Nichols, 2000

Examples of Measures of Effectiveness

Financial Aid	Turnaround time to process financial aid applications
Disability Services	Faculty perceptions of services
Student Affairs	Student connectedness to campus
Career Services	Rates of participation in career days
Institutional Research	Users' perceptions of quality of service

Developing Assessment Measures

- Questionnaires and Surveys
- Behavioral Checklists
- Activity Logs
- Session Checklists

Developing Questionnaires and Surveys

Purpose

- To gather information about:
  - Knowledge – what people know; how well they understand something
  - Beliefs – attitudes – opinions
  - Behavior – what people do
  - Attributes – what people are; what people have

Developing Questionnaires and Surveys

Tips for developing

- Make a list of what you want to know. What do you really want to find out? What do you want to achieve with the questionnaire?
- Don’t ask a question unless it has a use. Eliminate the ‘nice to know’ items that aren’t really essential.
- As you write questions, view them through your respondents’ eyes.
- Ask only one question in a question.

Developing Behavioral Checklists

Purpose

- To measure:
  - The frequency of behaviors
  - Change in behaviors

Developing Behavioral Checklists

Tips for developing

- Identify the behaviors in which you are interested
- Balance between including all essential behaviors and creating a checklist that is simple and easy to use
- Refine the list; items should be specific, observable and action oriented

Example: Behavioral Checklists

Establishing and Using Email Account Checklist		
	Yes	No
successfully logs onto network		
accesses email account creation screen		
successfully creates email account		
sends trial email		
retrieves new email		
successfully logs out of email account		
successfully logs out of network		
Date:		
Observer:		

Developing Activity Logs

Purpose

- Understand
  - How staff spend their time
  - When staff perform their best
  - Efficiency of processes or procedures

Developing Activity Logs

Tips for developing

- Decide if you need info on a range of activities or on a particular set of special interest activities
- Use the logs over a period of time – a month
- Provide training to staff on terms and use of log
- Provide incentives for staff to garner commitment

Example: Activity Logs

Sample Activity Log						
Name						
			Hours			
Date	Type and Location of Activity		Activity	Prep	Travel	Total
Date Submitted				Total Hours		

Developing Session Checklists

Purpose

- Ensure and Track that
  - Particular information is provided
  - Specific activities are conducted

Developing Session Checklists

Tips for developing

- Decide which activities are critical to conduct
- Decide which sets of information are critical to convey
- Now decide which of the above need to be tracked
- Keep the checklist short and simple

Example: Session Checklists

Session Checklist	
Pamphlet on STDs given	
Information on birth control given	
Pamphlet on importance of taking full cycle of antibiotics given	
Medications explained	
Follow-up session scheduled	

Information Systems Example:

Objective: Develop and implement plan for additional cross training of staff across system and product lines to increase efficiency of operations and to maintain quality of service during staff absences.

Possible Assessment Measures:

Financial Aid Example:

- Objective: Conduct training related to financial aid issues to improve staff knowledge.

- Possible Assessment Measures:

English & Theatre Example

- Objective: English & Theatre will review and evaluate undergraduate program curricula to ensure program effectiveness.
- Possible Assessment Measures:

Set Your Criteria For Success

Criteria for success:

tell you at what point you will be “happy” with your results for this objective.

- Level of accomplishment for which you are aiming

- Nichols: “…identif(y) a reasonable level of service improvement to expect given the resources and personnel the unit has available.”

Example

- Objective: Increase customer satisfaction
- KPI: Customer Feedback Form
- Criterion:
  - 80% of the customer feedback forms will indicate a satisfaction rating of at least 4 out of 5.
  - 100% of the customer feedback forms will indicate at least a satisfaction rating of 2 out of 5.

Criteria for Success: Win or Lose?

- 2 ways to WIN:
  - Meet your criteria for success
  - You do not meet your criteria for success, but implement procedures for further improvements to try to meet your criteria
- 2 ways to LOSE:
  - Fail to carry through with assessment activities
  - Accomplish assessment activities, but fail to use assessment information as a basis for improvement.

Part 2A: The Data Collection Process

Issues in Implementing Assessment Measures

- When will the data be collected?
- Who is considered a participant/client?
- Include all clients or a sample?
- Who will collect the data? How will the assessment be accomplished?
- How will confidentiality be protected, if necessary?
- How will clients be informed about data collection?
- Who will analyze the data?
- Who will use the data, how will they use the data and when will they use the data?

How and When Do I Collect Data?

- How
  - Survey
  - Observations
  - Counting Use
- When
  - *Continuous* Process
  - At the time of delivery of service
  - Contact Afterwards (at the end of every semester; annually)

Part 3: Analyzing & Using Results

Who or what is being assessed?

- Though we rely on information originating from clients, the outcomes of <u>individual</u> clients are <u>not</u> the focus of assessment, nor is it intended to be an “accountability” tool
- ***The <u>office/unit</u> itself is the focus of assessment; aggregated results are used to assess the office***
- Therefore, a representative sample of clients is often sufficient for effective assessment of offices/units

What are the key questions assessment should answer?

- Are processes effective?
- Are the processes/services doing what they are supposed to be doing?
- How can processes be improved?

How Do I Analyze Assessment Data?

- **How**
  - Compare year to year and/or
  - Compare workshop to workshop and/or
  - Compare procedure to procedure

  - Examine number (N, frequency) and percentage (percentile, quartile) and/or
  - Examine mean (average) and/or
  - Examine median

What do all these terms mean?

- N: is just the total *number* of responses
- Frequency: a count of how often something occurred or an answer was given
- Percentage: the ratio of frequency to total number
  - 5 (frequency) out of 100 (N) equals 20%
- Mean: equals the average
- Median: the number at which half are below and half are above.

Data Terms in Action

	Objective 1	**Objective 2**	**Objective 3**	Total Score	**Mean Score**
Todd	42.5	39.7	42.0	124.2	41.4
Keene	48.5	52.5	59.1	160.1	53.4
Telford	53.1	48.7	51.0	152.8	50.9
Walters	39.5	32.5	33.6	105.6	35.2
Sullivan	51.1	48.2	44.3	143.6	47.9
Burnam	41.0	39.5	33.2	113.7	37.9
Mean	46.0	43.5	43.9	133.3	44.4
N = 6					
Frequency with Total Score below 145 = 4					
Percentage with Total Score below 145 = 66%					
Mean Total Score = 133.3					
Average score for Objective 1 = 46.0					
Median Total Score = 125					

Issues in Using Various Types of Data

- N:
  - Is the N large enough?
  - Is the group representative – characteristics, how sampled?
- Frequency:
  - By itself is not sufficient – pair it with the N and/or the %
- Percentage %
  - Best when paired with frequency
  - Use when want to know how many did or said something
- Mean
  - Use when want to know the “average” response
- Median
  - Use when “outliers” make the mean meaningless

When Do I Analyze Assessment Data?

- When
  - At the end of each semester
  - As it is collected
  - Once a year
  - Annual Institutional Effectiveness Progress Report (see Institutional Effectiveness Calendar)

Questions to ask when analyzing results of data:

- How do the results compare with what we expected to happen (criteria of success)? Did we get where we wanted to go?
  - Is there still room for improvement?
  - What could we do to make this better?
- What have we learned?
- What do we know about the needs of our stakeholders now? What should we do differently in the future?
- Will the objective and/or KPI stay the same or change based on this past year's experience?
  - What should be this year's/next year's priorities, based on what we now know?

How Do I Use Results To Improve My Services?

- "Map" the results back to the activities for the services you offer:
  - Example: Improve efficiency with which purchase orders are processed
    - Identify activities/steps for processing a purchase order
  - Where is the breakdown?
    - Need to have enough information (data) to make a decision (use additional data if available)
  - Make changes to the "activity" based on results

How does assessment relate to what takes place in our offices?

- Each planning objective can be “mapped” back to the activity or process in which it was accomplished

- Then when certain objectives are identified as needing improvement, we can work back to the activity, workshop or process to which it was mapped and strengthen that activity

Customer Service Example

- <u>Customer Service Objective:</u>
  - Increase customer satisfaction with services of Library.
- <u>Assessment Measure</u>: Customer Feedback Form
  - Areas covered on feedback form
    - Courtesy of staff
    - Promptness of reply
    - Knowledge of staff
    - Solution to issues

Customer Service Example

- Link the feedback form questions to specific customer satisfaction areas
  - Questions 1-3 assess courtesy
  - Questions 4-6 assess promptness
  - Questions 7-9 assess knowledge of staff
  - Questions 10-12 assess solutions to issues
- Rating Scale: 5=excellent, 4=good, 3=average, 2=fair, 1=poor

Customer Service Example

Customer Satisfaction Survey Ratings					
	Courtesy	Prompt	Knowledge	Solutions	Average Rating
Chapman	4	4	5	4	4.3
Bauer	5	4	5	5	4.8
Street	4	2	4	4	3.5
Miller	4	4	3	3	3.5
Ratiu	2	2	2	2	2.0
Koppes	3	3	3	3	3.0
Satterfield	5	5	5	5	5.0
Martin	2	2	2	2	2.0
Borowski	5	4	5	5	4.8
St. Pierre	4	3	3	3	3.3
McGregor	4	4	5	4	4.3
Average	3.8	3.4	3.8	3.6	3.7
Percentage with average satisfaction rating at or above 3.5 = 64%					

Customer Service Example

- Establish criteria for success
  - 80% of the customer feedback forms will indicate an average satisfaction rating of at least 3.5 out of 5.
  - 100% of the customer feedback forms will indicate an average satisfaction rating of at least 2 out of 5.
  - On no service area will the average rating be less than 3.5 out of 5.

Customer Service Example

Customer Satisfaction Survey Ratings					
	Courtesy	Prompt	Knowledge	Solutions	Average Rating
Keeley	4	4	5	4	4.3
Bauer	5	4	5	5	4.8
Street	4	2	4	4	3.5
Miller	4	4	3	3	3.5
Ratiu	2	2	2	2	2.0
Koppes	3	3	3	3	3.0
Satterfield	5	5	5	5	5.0
Middleton	2	2	2	2	2.0
Glasser	5	4	5	5	4.8
Conneely	4	3	3	3	3.3
Good	4	4	5	4	4.3
Average	3.8	3.4	3.8	3.6	3.7
Percentage with average satisfaction rating above 3.5 = 64%					

How Do I Use Results To Improve My Services?

- “Map” the results back to the activities for the services you offer
- Where is the breakdown?
- Make changes to the “activity” based on results

Customer Service Example

Customer Service Activity-Objective Linkage Matrix						
	Phone/Email Contact	**Face-to-Face Contact**	**Approval Process**	**Issue Solved**	**Time to solution**	**Others Involved or Contacted**
Courtesy	X	X				
Promptness	X	X	X		X	X
Knowledge			X	X		X
Solutions			X	X	X	X

Customer Service Example

- Additional data analysis indicated
  - Examine individual questions for indications of even more specific areas for improvement
  - Examine processes within each activity area for possible improvement areas –
    - Promptness example:
      - Do all staff have their own computers?
      - How are telephone messages handled?
      - Do staff have authority to make decisions?
      - Is there an approval process that slows things down?

Customer Service Example

- Program Improvement
  - Re-evaluation of objective criteria
  - Staff customer service training
  - Review and revise processes for replying to customer contacts to increase promptness
  - Revise the survey to ensure it is accurately measuring satisfaction components

How Do I “Close The Loop”?

- Use the results for improvement (“Use of Results” in TracDat)
- Check if the improvements result in the intended change(s) (“Follow-Up” in TracDat)
- If unit meets its criteria for success, the KPI should be monitored for a few iterations to ensure continued success.
- Document!
- Document!
- Document!

Closing the Loop

USE FINDINGS

in

FURTHER PLANNING

for

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT!

What considerations are involved in "closing the loop"?

- Outcomes from one year set the stage for developments in following years: *"This is the result, so next year we will…."*
- Some things intended may not have been fully accomplished and next year's plan will have to pick them up at whatever point they are at and move forward from there.
- Some expectations for performance may have been exceeded or completed more rapidly than anticipated. If so, the next plan should take that into consideration.

What considerations are involved in "closing the loop"?

- New knowledge or priorities may suggest that some parts of the plan be set aside or de-emphasized and others developed instead.

- Achievement of objectives with high performance measures may suggest that intentions are largely met and barring unforeseen changes in circumstances need only be revisited every few years as a check on their continued high levels.

Framework for Good Assessment Practice: Planning Objectives

1. Each office must have planning objectives with the following characteristics:
   - Linked to EKU's statement of mission and strategic directions and the unit goals and strategic directions
   - Developed by office staff
   - Measurable, actionable and time-bound
   - Related to the services the office provides
   - Focused on quality of services and administrative processes

Framework for Good Assessment Practice: Planning Objectives

2. Each office must employ measures of planning objectives with the following characteristics:
   - Developed and used by staff and office stakeholders
   - Must relate to one or more of the following: processes (volume of activity, efficiency, compliance with external standards), client outcomes (ability of clients after services have been provided), satisfaction (overall client satisfaction or service specific
   - Must make sense vis-à-vis the outcome being measured
   - Must measure something realistic, useful and meaningful.

Framework for Good Assessment Practice: Planning Objectives

3. Each office must employ multiple measures of planning objectives with the following characteristics:
   - Both direct and indirect measures are used in concert to "triangulate" and corroborate the findings. *Direct Measure*: Turn-around time and process completion rates; data error/accuracy rates/ participation rates in special events; % of time that network server were kept online, etc. *Indirect Measure*: survey of satisfaction with services
   - Each measure can be related back to planning objectives and be used to improve operations and services
   - New measures are introduced periodically to determine efficacy and relationship to other measures so as to keep assessment program relevant and up-to-date

Framework for Good Assessment Practice: Planning Objectives

4. Each office must analyze the results of its assessment measures, and the analysis must have the following characteristics:
   - Developed and conducted by office staff and stakeholders
   - Relates results back to planning objectives
   - Thoroughly and thoughtfully documented
   - Evaluative (why) as well as descriptive (what)
   - Criteria for success are developed and used
   - Needs to be able to result in corrective action

Framework for Good Assessment Practice: Planning Objectives

5. Feedback from the assessment process is used to improve the office and administrative processes within the office. This feedback has the following characteristics:
   - Developed by staff and office stakeholders
   - Relates back to specific planning objectives
   - Relates both to “what we do” and “how we do it”
   - Maps feedback on outcomes back to specific activities and functions
   - Actions taken based on feedback are reflected in office planning and budgeting processes

Questions & Assistance

- Fine-tune your planning objectives
- Work on your key performance indicators
- Ask questions regarding the information presented today

- If you need further assistance, please call Institutional Effectiveness (2*8664)