Starting Strong as Assessment Leaders

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Leading You on this Journey Today...

AMANDA WORNHOFF, ED.D.

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14 of Years in Higher Ed

Faculty affairs

Curriculum

Student Success

Assessment

Accreditation

Private and public institutions

ALLIE MICHAEL, ED.D.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, IEA

15 years in Higher Ed

Annual Giving and Alumni Relations

Accreditation

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Student Engagement

Adjunct Support

Assessment

About APSU

- Located in Clarksville, TN

- ~10,000 Enrollment, diverse student body

- Associates, Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral programs offered

- SACSCOC Accredited

- Assessment Cycles Include:

    - ~60 Non-Degree units

    - ~60 Degree and Certificate programs

Who is in the Room?

Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment, Decision Support, Institutional Research staff/administrators?

Faculty?

Poor souls who have recently been thrown into the assessment world?

How many years have you been involved in assessment?

Our Purpose Today

Reflect + Share → Theorize + Analyze → Ideate + Plan

Reflect + share

Visualization Exercise

Step 1: Envision how an assessment process in your department, area, division, college, etc. would ultimately operate. Things to envision:

◦ Who is involved?

◦ How do participants interact with one another and you?

◦ How would the process be effective?

Step 2: Prepare a drawing on a sheet of paper that captures this vision. Be as literal or as abstract as you'd like!

Step 3: Share your drawing and vision with a small group.
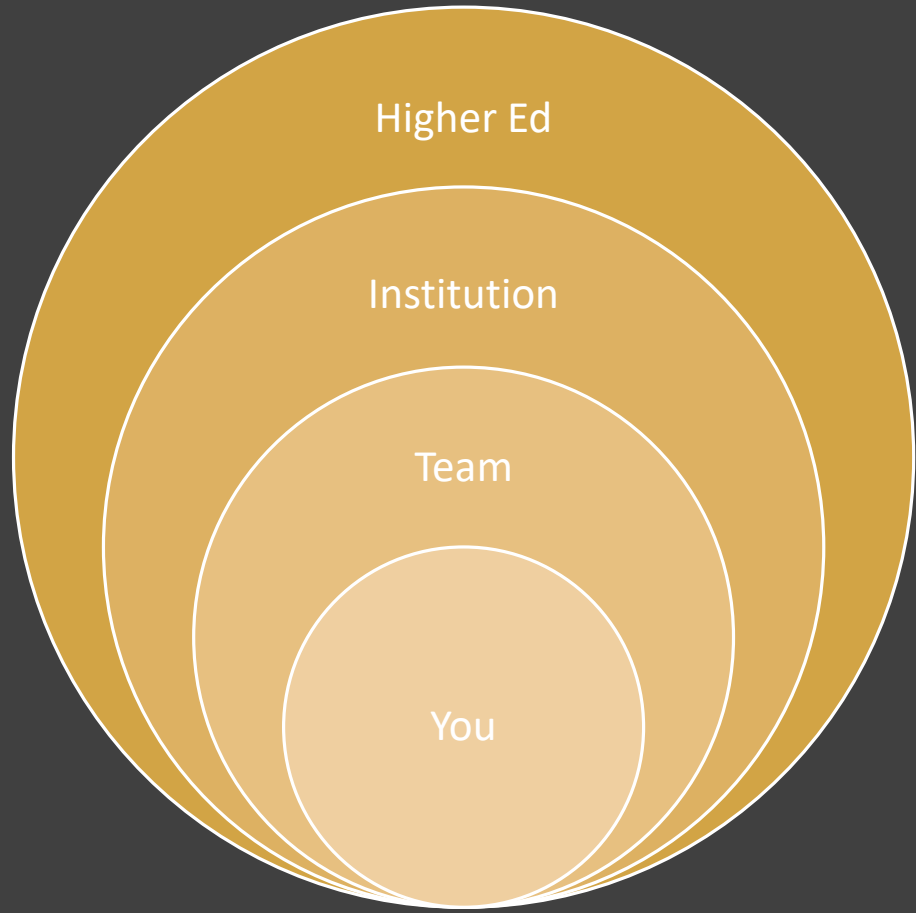
Discussion

With your small groups, discuss the following:

- Is your vision attainable?
- What are the resources, attitudes, processes, etc. that will encourage this vision? What will be a challenge?
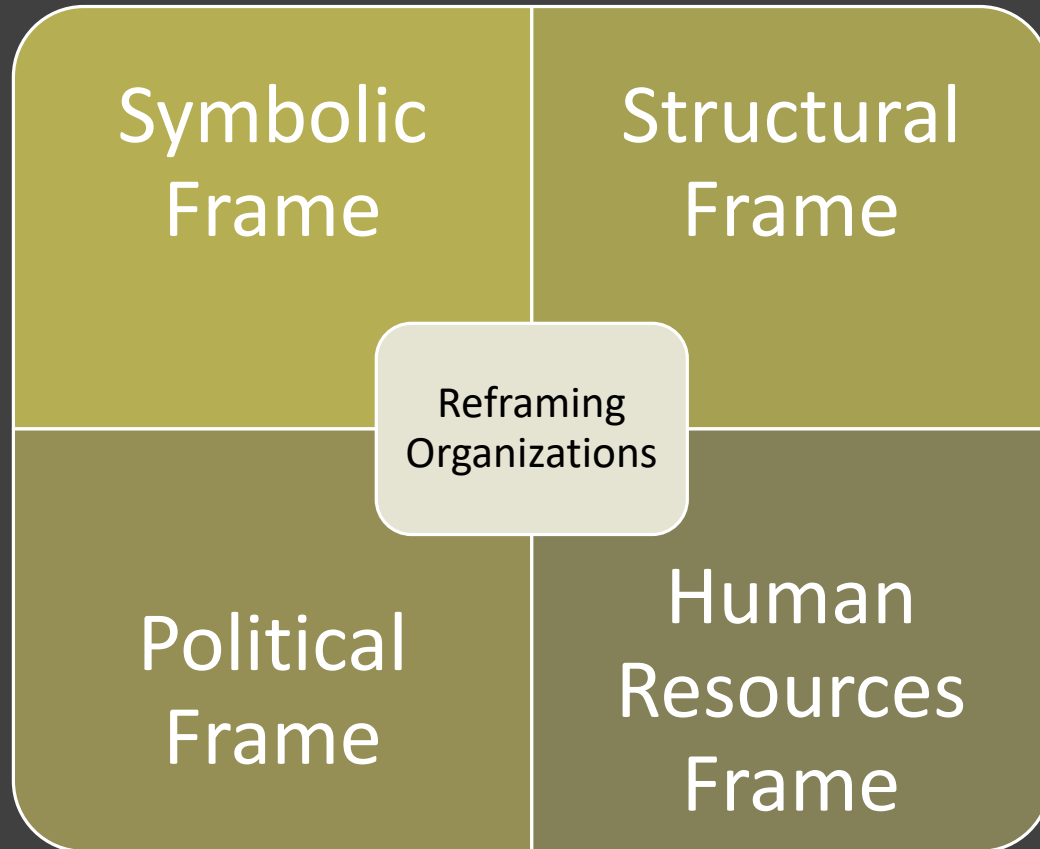- What would you need to succeed in this vision (i.e., staff, software, funding, etc.)

Theorize + analyze

(Re)framing Assessment Work

Symbolic Frame	Structural Frame
Political Frame	Human Resources Frame

Reframing Organizations

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice & leadership. 5th ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

New to Assessment? NILOA Resources: https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/browse-by/new-to-assessment/

◦ Learning Assessment Research Consortium (LARC): Chris Cratsley (Fitchburg State University), Jennifer Herman (Simmons University), Linda Bruenjes (Suffolk University), and Victoria Wallace (MGH Institute of Health Professions)

(Re)framing Assessment Work
(Adapted from LARC's "Developing Sustainable Assessment Practices" Module in NILOA)

Symbolic Frame

◦ How can you better connect your assessment efforts to the campus mission, strategic plan, international or national standards and/or accreditation? (LARC)

◦ *How can you develop assessment initiatives the reflect your own professional values and assessment philosophies?*

Political Frame

◦ How can you better connect your assessment efforts with critical stakeholders who have the potential to help insure its sustainability? (LARC)

◦ *How can you use assessment initiatives to build relationships with critical stakeholders?*
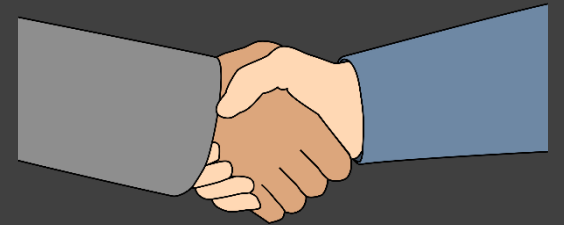
(Re)framing Assessment Work
(Adapted from LARC's "Developing Sustainable Assessment Practices" Module in NILOA)

Structural Frame

◦ How can you insure that you have the proper organizational and communication structures in place to sustain the level of assessment you have planned? (LARC)

◦ *How can you use existing organizational and communication structures to your advantage?*
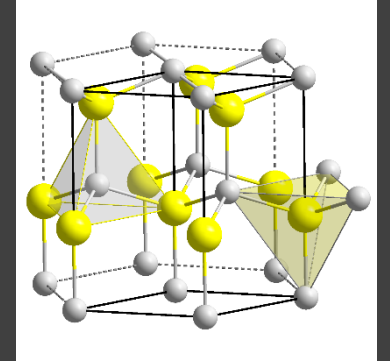
Human Resources Frame

◦ How can you insure that you have provided appropriate support in the form of professional development resources, personnel, time and rewards to sustain your assessment process? (LARC)

◦ *How can you apply your professional strengths and learning to an assessment initiative?*
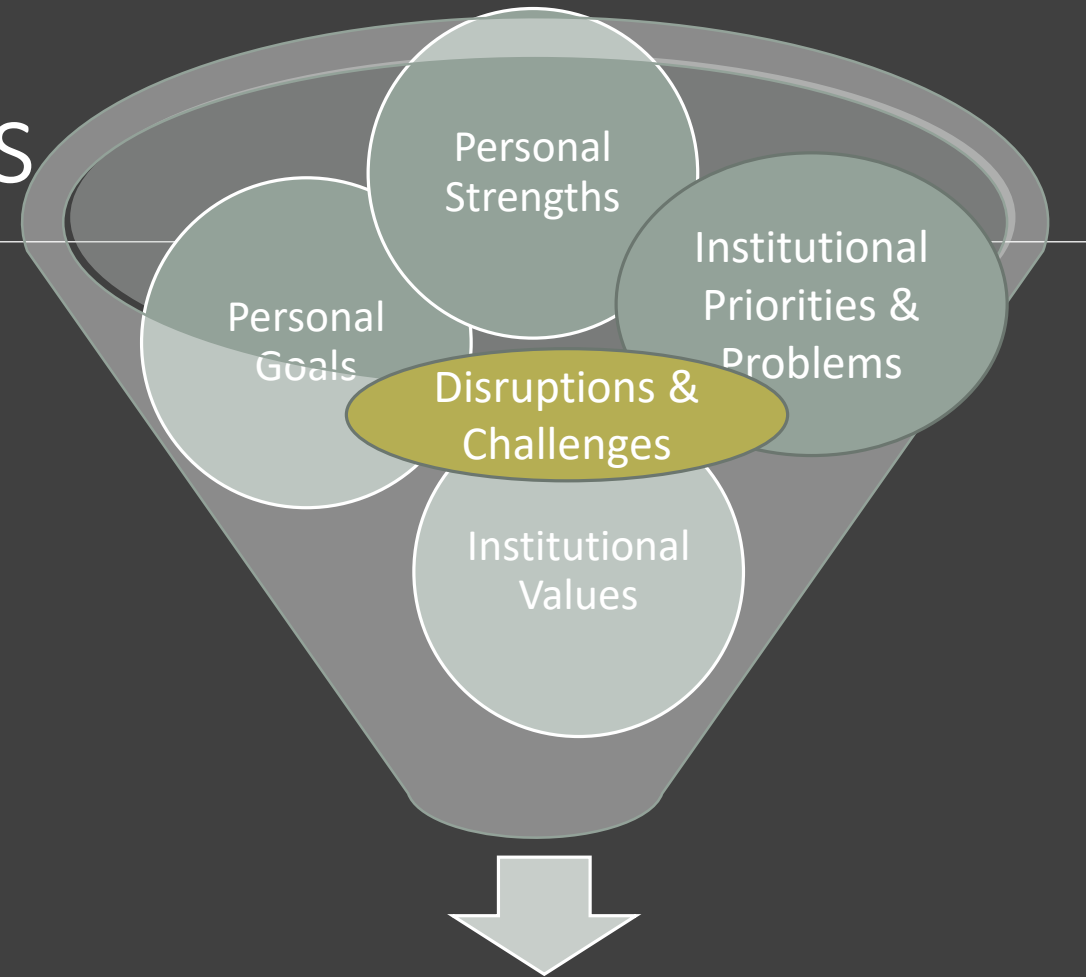
Identifying Initiatives

Embrace the chaos
◦ Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice (Cohen, Olsen, and March 1972)
  ◦ "chaotic reality of organizational decision making in an organized anarchy"

Harness ambiguity
◦ Ambiguity and Multiple Streams (Kingdon 1995 in Sabatier)
  ◦ Agenda-setting ←→ Problems, policies, and politics

Personal Strengths

Institutional Priorities & Problems

Personal Goals

Disruptions & Challenges

Institutional Values

Assessment Initiative Ideas

Backwards Design

Work backward from the desired outcome

Three phases:
1. Identify the outcomes
2. Examine the current conditions
3. Develop a plan to redesign the current situation to achieve the desired outcome

Kezar & Maxey, 2015; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998

Ideate & Plan

Creating an Action Plan

Focus on at least one major institution-specific assessment initiative

Supporting You + Institution: Essential Components

❑ Desired outcomes

❑ Brief Proposal, with numbers (participants, quantitative targets, budget)

❑ Ties to institutional priorities

❑ Clear and direct requests for specific support needed (not just $, but public support, collaborations, communication, etc. – remember the 4 frames!)

❑ Assessment of initiative / data collection

❑ Short but meaningful "blurb" you can use in writing or in conversation (in current context or in resume, cover letter, interview)

References

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice & leadership*. 5th ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1972). A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *17*(1), 1–25.

Cratsley, C., Herman, J., Bruenjes, J., and Wallace, V. Developing Sustainable Assessment Practices. *New to Assessment?: Assessment Modules.* Learning Assessment Research Consortium (LARC) and National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).

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Kingdon, J. W. (1995). *Agendas, alternatives and public policies* (2nd ed.). New York: HaperCollins.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by design.* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.