

STEPS FOR PERFORMING ASSESSMENT

1. Think about your **current programs and services**. Analyze your performance plan, dept goals.
2. Pinpoint a **specific goal or end-result** for which you are striving. Begin with a manageable topic.
3. Make a **list of procedures** for your particular process as it is now.
4. Document the things you think would be helpful to you to **determine if your goals are being met**. Turn these into questions you will ask the people using your program/service. Questions should be specific. Reach for answers that can inform or improve the services/program.
5. Remember that assessment can take 3 primary forms:
 - Frequency - **how many** people use my program or service?
 - Satisfaction - **did the users like the program or service?** Were their hopes met?
 - Outcome - **what effect/correlation can be drawn** between our program or service and the user's behavior or development? If your program aims to change attitudes, experiences or behaviors, at least some of your questions should fall into this category.
6. Prioritize your questions and **decide how to collect preliminary data**: focus groups, evaluations, mail surveys, email surveys, web surveys.
7. **Collect and analyze data** efficiently.
8. **Evaluate your outcomes**. Are users satisfied? Are goals being met? Give reasons.
9. **Revisit initial list of procedures** with new information in mind.
10. **Prepare report** describing your outcomes. Include a brief summary statement backed up by data, reports, surveys and other supporting material. If feedback indicates a change is needed, describe how you will change your current procedures based on the feedback you collected. If feedback indicates that your goals are being met, use the results to showcase procedures that are working well.

NEXT: Set goals for next round of assessments. **Assessments should become a regular part of your planning processes**. "Data collection" should become more seamlessly integrated into program and service delivery. More people should know how to ask good questions and assess the information they need to be successful.