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# Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation

## Definitions

### Handbook concise definition:

*Assessment, planning, and evaluation is the organizational competency that depicts the continuous quality improvement cycle.*

### Competency component definitions:

**Assessment** (a ses' ment) n. picture of the current situation within its internal or external environmental context, frequently compared with the past situation and/or performance and the future desired level or benchmark of success

**Planning** (plan' ning) n. scheme for making, doing, or arranging something more effectively; creating a set of decisions for future action

**Evaluation** (e val' u a' tion) n. appraisal of effectiveness of making, doing, or arranging something, with the intent of improving quality of process and/or improving the positive magnitude of effect or outcome

### Examples/actions:

- Identifies potential strategic issues through ongoing macro-environmental scanning
- Identifies, collects, and interprets information regarding the health status of individuals or populations in order to formulate and prioritize goals and objectives for program services, secure and allocate resources, and provide feedback to improve activities and outcomes



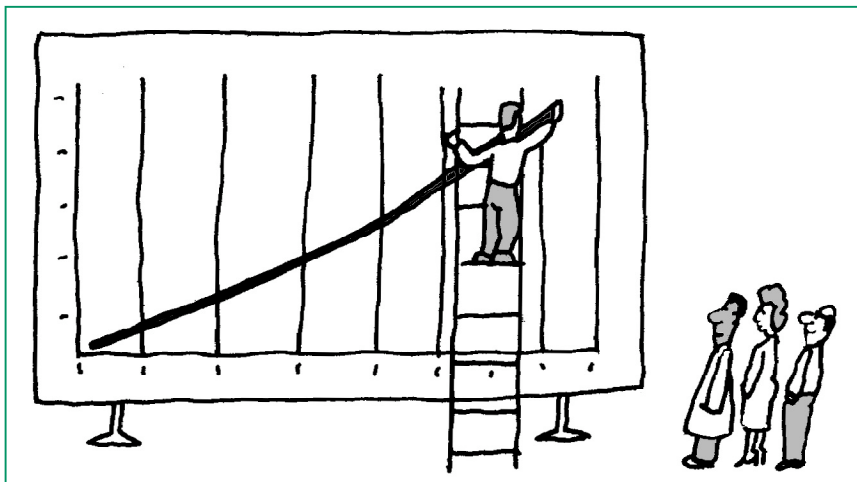
In your assessment, planning, and evaluation activities, who is involved?

How representative and inclusive is the process?

Have you noticed any correlation between effective assessment, planning, and evaluation and improved performance?

## Vignette: Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation

One of the things that really irritated the director was not how hard the agency staff worked, but how often they spent time reinventing the wheel. Wall to wall, she began to insist on looking at all processes in terms of: (1) assessing the needs and resources of any given program; (2) planning how to incorporate these needs and resources into the implementation; and (3) evaluating the program performance, what was learned from successes and difficulties and making this information available for the next assessment. She insisted that this process be adopted in internal agency systems as well as in collaborative dealings with other agencies and in community interactions. Although a simple concept, this organizational competence ensures that the institution continues to learn and that performance continues to improve. The director says, "I am so glad to see us working smarter." Throughout the organization, it is not unusual to hear people say, "Now, what did we learn and how can we use that?"



How important is assessment, planning, and evaluation for your organization in the future?

- High
- Medium
- Low

How does your organization demonstrate assessment, planning, and evaluation? Are they performed in a formal or information setting?

Do you think your organization does a good job of learning from its mistakes and successes? Do assessment, planning, and evaluation activities overtly include the widest appropriate spectrum of departments and levels of staff?