

NCAIR 2012 CONFERENCE

"THE ART OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH"

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CHRISTINA LEIMER, PH.D.

Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness California State University, Fresno

HIGHER ED CHALLENGES

- Regulatory/Accreditation
- Funding/Financial
- Demonstrate Value
- Continuous Improvement
- Evidence-Based Decision Making



HIGHER ED NEED

 2/3 of Presidents said Institution Not Strong at Using Data for Decisions

(Source: Inside Higher Ed survey, 2011)

60% of Provosts said More Assessment Expertise Needed

(Source: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment survey, 2009)

Data Not Enough

(Source: WASC personal communication, Barbara Wright, Nov. 1, 2011)

External Reporting Focus, Bureaucratic, Slow

(Source: Mark Milliron, Gates Foundation, 2011 EDUCAUSE Conference)



WHO WILL FILL THIS NEED





"The merits of institutional research depend not on its scientific underpinnings, but on its relevance and influence in decision and policy making."

Cameron Fincher, 1985, "The Art and Science of Institutional Research"



How Does IR
INFLUENCE
DECISION
MAKING,
POLICY, NEED?



THE ART OF IR

TERENZINI'S 3 INTELLIGENCES

- 1. Technical/Analytical
- 2. Issues
- 3. Context

Terenzini, P.T. (1999). On the nature of institutional research and the knowledge and skills it requires.



TECHNICAL/ANALYTICAL INTELLIGENCE

Factual Knowledge and Methodological Skills

Written & Oral Communication Computer Skills



ISSUES INTELLIGENCE

- Know major issues and decision areas
- Understand how institutions function and how decisions are made
- Importance and role of political persuasion, compromise, prior consultation, professional courtesy, working with others to accomplish goals

Creating The street of the str

ALLOWS US TO...

- Anticipate Stakeholder Needs
- Richer Analyses
- Implications and Recommendations
- Collaboratively Frame and Refine Questions
- Focus Possibilities for Change

Leimer, (forthcoming 2012). Change magazine.



CONTEXT INTELLIGENCE

"reflects organizational savvy and wisdom"

"earns institutional research and researchers legitimacy, trust and respect"

-Terenzini, P.T. (1999).

- Understand higher ed and institution's culture, history, values & attitudes of others
- Appreciate and respect others' perspectives
- Recognize constraints & opportunities of external environment



CONTEXT INTELLIGENCE ALLOWS US To...

- Set institutional issues in broader context
- Expand institutional awareness
- Use findings to challenge assumptions, prompt reflection, stimulate change
- Utilize institutional alliances and culture to spread use of data in decision making

Leimer, (forthcoming 2012). Change magazine.



NTELLIGENCES REPORTED

- ► Technical/Analytical (70-81%)
- Issues (53-79%)
- Context (28-66%)
 - N=601 AIR members, nationally
 - In profession avg. 7 yrs; range 1-35 yrs
 - 57% Directors, 10% Asst/Assoc Director

Knight, W.E., Moore, M.E., and Coperthwaite, C.A. (1997). Institutional Research: Knowledge, Skills and Perceptions of Effectiveness. *Research in Higher Education*, 38(4), p. 419.



We Must

Shift

Perspective

About Who We Are What We Do



- Knowledge Creator
- Problem Solver
- Communicator
- Connector
- Educator
- Tactician
- Change Agent

Typical IR mission statement

Provide data and information to support...



MAKING THE SHIFT

- Need Match: IR and institutional culture & expectations, leaders' personality and decision making orientation *Knight, Moore, & Coperthwaite, (1997).*
- IR Professionals develop Issues & Context Intelligences
- IR Professionals intentionally engage, demonstrate use/value of intelligences
- Sr. management create opportunities for IR growth and greater use





Creates

A more holistic, complex IR to meet higher education's challenges

"The backbone of science is logic and experiment. The basis of art is intuition and insight.

...They reflect different, complementary aspects of human experience and give us a complete idea of the world only when taken together."

Leonid Ponomarev, Physicist Quoted in *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, B. Edwards, 1979



RESOURCES

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- Terenzini, P.T. (1999). On the nature of institutional research and the knowledge and skills it requires. In J. F. Volkwein (Ed.), What is institutional research all about?, *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 104, p. 21-29.