

# Gotta Find Your Purpose

## UB 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Assessment Day

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**TOOLBOX**

**IN ASSESSMENT**

Just like in research, good assessment starts with good...



**TOOLBOX**

IN ASSESSMENT

# Is it possible to assessment completely accurately?

- No!
- Samples or snapshots of time
- Draw our best conclusions based on that sample knowing there is measurement error
- “We must simply strive to make assessments sufficiently truthful that we will have reasonable confidence in our findings and can use them with enough assurance to make decisions about goals, curricula, and teaching strategies” (Suskie, 2009, p. 38)



**Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about**

**- Assessment in Practice, by Trudy Banta, p.2**



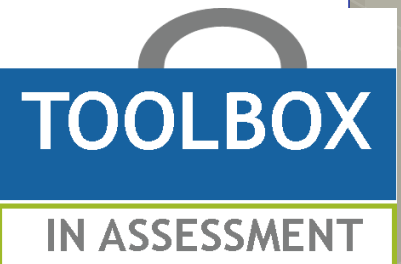
**TOOLBOX**

**IN ASSESSMENT**

# 5 Dimensions of Good Assessment:

- Provide useful information
- Are focused, simple and cost effective
- Give us reasonably accurate, truthful information
- Systematic, transparent and consistent
- Fair and ethical
- Qualitative and well as quantitative

(Suskie, 2006, p. 1)





# Why?

Roots  
assessment in  
priorities

Focuses = not  
assessment  
everything

Planning =  
varying  
assessment  
methods

Streamline and  
plan resources  
needed

More effective  
instruments

Connects results  
to actions faster

Guides data  
analysis

Ensures you're  
getting the data  
you need

# Planning Assessment Backwards

- What do you want to discover?
- What sources of evidence can you draw on?
- Slow down to think about:
  - What do you want to learn about?
  - Who do you need to get the information from?
  - How do you want to assess (or learn)?
  - When is a good time to capture that information?
- Without asking these questions results risk being less than useful

(Maki, 2010, p. 8)





When you start an assessment project, ask yourself three key questions:

- Start with “why.” Why does your course, academic program, co-curricular program and/or service exist? When you know the answers to your why, you will know what to assess, as this is the impact you hope to make.
- When deciding what to assess, select those that address program goals, those related to longer interventions, those with a greater number of participants and those that use greater resources.
- If you have a number of activities related to one goal, you will not want to assess every activity related to that goal.” But you don’t need to do it all at once

Dr. Vicki Wise, Portland State University (OR)



**TOOLBOX**

IN ASSESSMENT

Worksheet time...





## **Based on your purpose/topic**

1. What question do you want to ask or get answered?
2. How might you begin gathering information to answer that question? (Hint: try on some new techniques in the next breakout session)

**TOOLBOX**

**IN ASSESSMENT**

# References

- Banta, T.W., Lund, J.P., Black K.E., Oblander, F.W. (1996). *Assessment in practice: Putting principles to work on college campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
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