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Diving Into Assessment: LibQUAL+(TM) as a Springboard

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Challenging our Expertise

"...seeing data that allow questioning of deeply held assumptions that shape current views, biases, and internal perceptions...can keep libraries in touch with reality. ...It is important to attain this grasp of reality in order to learn how to change with and for customers." (Philips, 2001)

Some staff think that by utilizing new measures that are customer-focused, libraries will be driven to "just do what the customers say" or be driven by a business model focused on competition and the bottom line. ..."Research libraries have a shared vision. ...Listening to this vision should inform what is learned from customers." (Philips, 2001)

Fear, Suspicion and Lack of Trust

“There is an underlying fear that expectations may develop that cannot be met.” (Philips, 2001)

Measurement should not be feared as a potential tool for blame and punishment but should be embraced as a means of demonstrating success or learning of the need to change strategies.” (Lakos & Philips, 2004)

For assessment and evaluation to succeed an open working environment is needed. This is usually impossible in an organization that manifests turf wars and personal distrust.” (Lakos & Philips, 2004)

Inexperience with Evaluation Methods

“Assessment cannot be seen as a separate ‘management activity’ but must be appreciated and valued by all members of the culture and assumed to be part of their regular work. ...If organizations are serious about change, they need to invest in the development of new skills to sustain it.” (Lakos & Philips, 2004)

Leadership

“Leadership is essential for assessment work to succeed. Leaders must have a clear performance ethic...be visibly and continuously engaged in meaningful strategic dialogue within the organization...develop incentive programs that support cultural change.” (Lakos & Philips, 2004)

References