NCAIR 2012 CONFERENCE
“THE ART OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH”
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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

Technical and Methodological Expertise
“The merits of institutional research depend not on its scientific underpinnings, but on its relevance and influence in decision and policy making.”

HOW DOES IR INFLUENCE DECISION MAKING, POLICY, NEED?
THE ART OF IR

TERENZINI’S 3 INTELLIGENCES

1. Technical/Analytical
2. Issues
3. Context

**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

ISSUES INTELLIGENCE ALLOWS US TO...

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

CONTEXT INTELLIGENCE

▶ Understand higher ed and institution’s culture, history, values & attitudes of others

▶ Appreciate and respect others’ perspectives

▶ Recognize constraints & opportunities of external environment

“reflects organizational savvy and wisdom”
“earns institutional research and researchers legitimacy, trust and respect”

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

INTELLIGENCES 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

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
Blending Science & Art 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


