LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

SASSE USERS WORKSHOP, MARCH 2015

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SASSE

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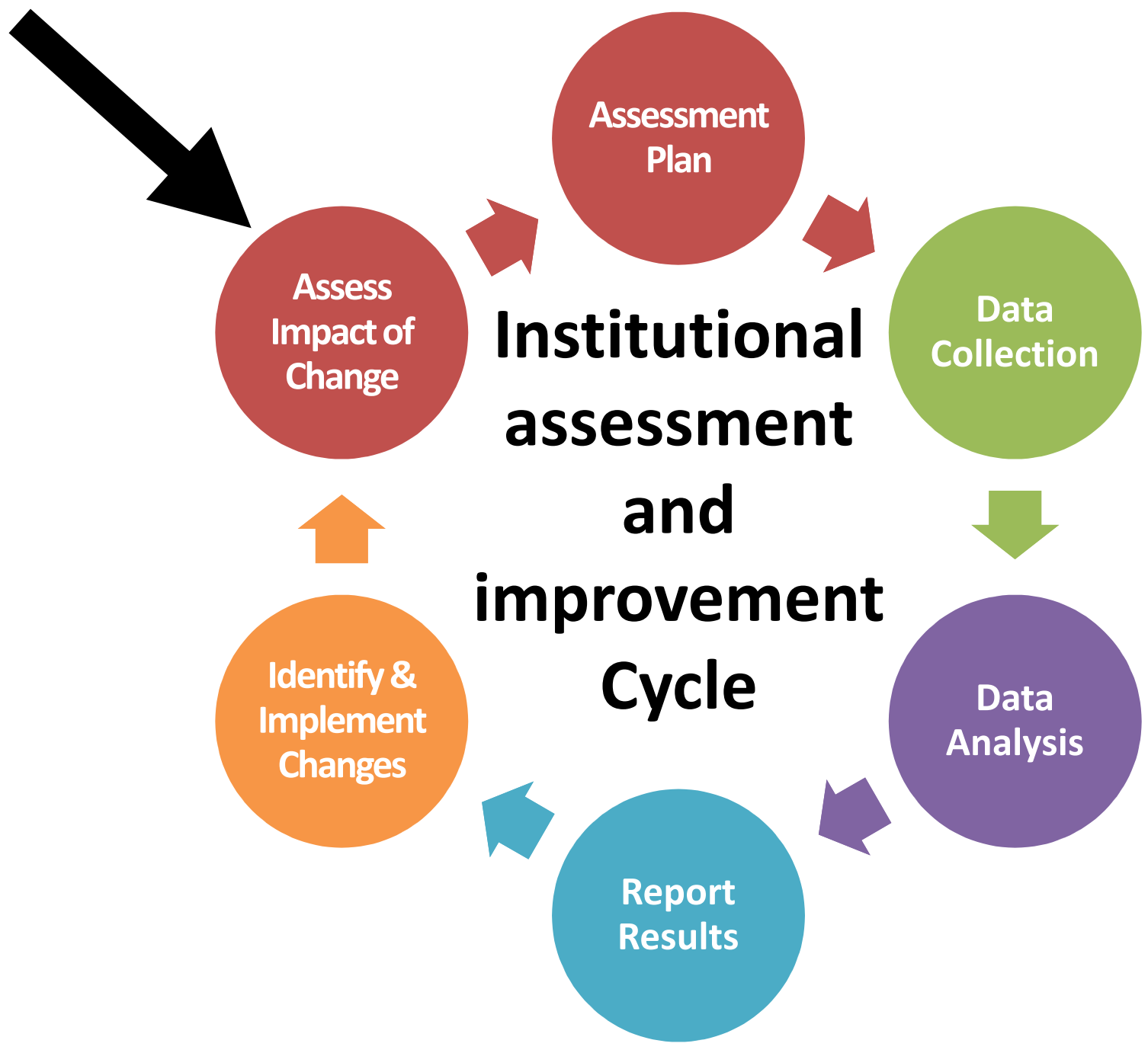**FREISTATA**

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Overview

- Lessons from the field for:
  - Sharing data
  - Improving teaching and learning
  - Creating high-impact environments

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD FOR SHARING DATA

Institutional assessment and improvement Cycle

- Assessment Plan
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Report Results
- Identify & Implement Changes
- Assess Impact of Change

SASSE Cautions

- Only one source of information about student experience

- Not everyone will jump on the student engagement bandwagon

- Managing denial when confronted with less-than-desirable results

- Be sure results are thoroughly vetted

- Data don't speak for themselves

- Link results to other data

SASSE Virtues

- Survey has compelling face validity

- Concept of engagement is accessible

  - Questions are information that are known to students and staff

- Window into the areas that all universities espouse to be important

- Points to areas where improvement is possible

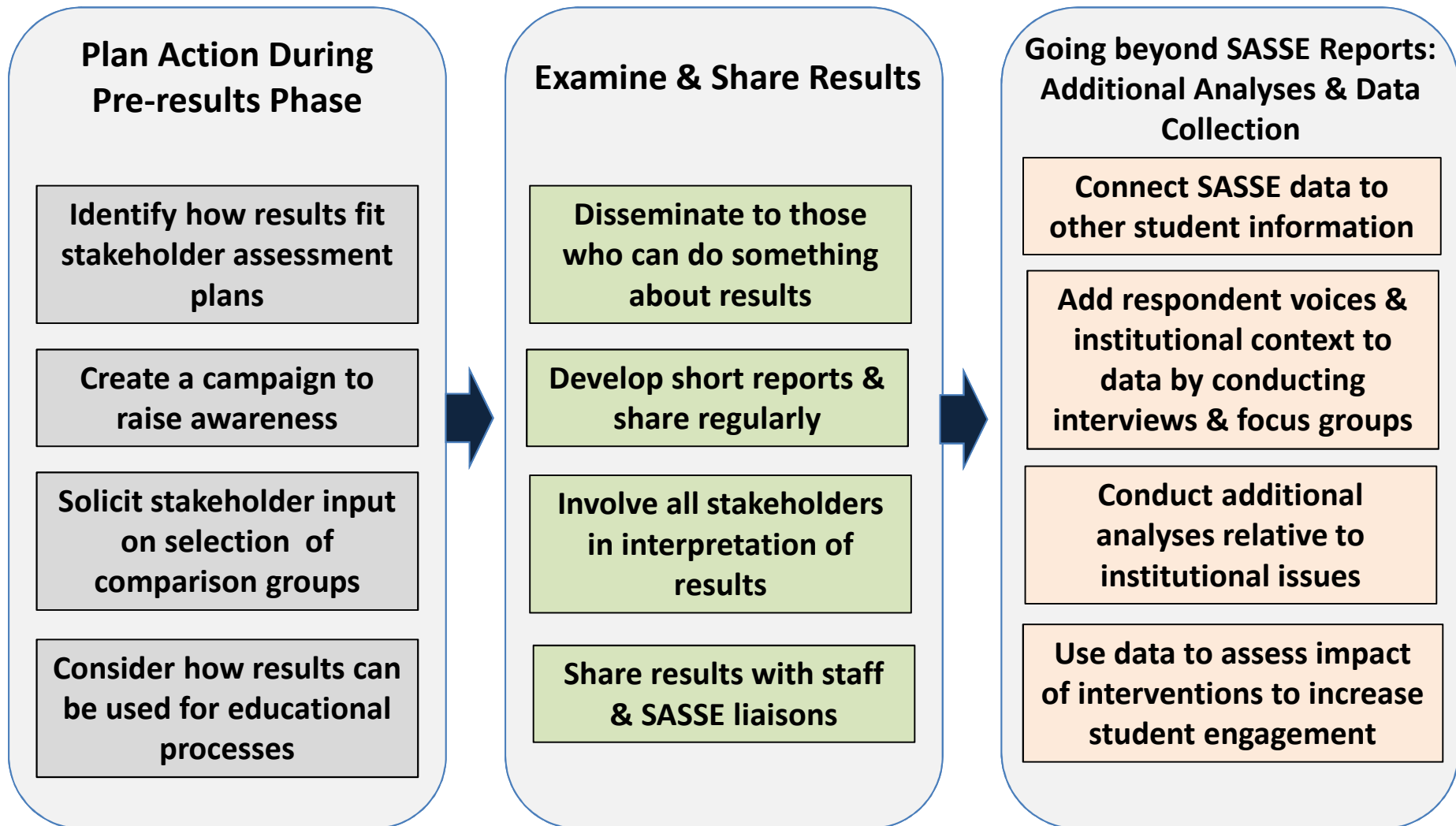- Data reveal national and comparative picture

Converting results to action

- Assessment information should be actionable

- If assessment doesn't help improve teaching and learning activities and ultimately, student success... *why bother with it*?

- Implementing large-scale, transformational change in institutions is difficult

Collective wisdom from users: Moving from data to action

Plan Action During Pre-results Phase

Identify how results fit stakeholder assessment plans

Create a campaign to raise awareness

Solicit stakeholder input on selection of comparison groups

Consider how results can be used for educational processes

Examine & Share Results

Disseminate to those who can do something about results

Develop short reports & share regularly

Involve all stakeholders in interpretation of results

Share results with staff & SASSE liaisons

Going beyond SASSE Reports: Additional Analyses & Data Collection

Connect SASSE data to other student information

Add respondent voices & institutional context to data by conducting interviews & focus groups

Conduct additional analyses relative to institutional issues

Use data to assess impact of interventions to increase student engagement

Source: Kinzie, J. & Pennipede, B. (2009). Converting engagement results into action. *New Directions for Institutional Research.*

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 1: Make sure staff (academic and support) understand the concept of student engagement

- What student engagement is and its value for improving teaching and learning needs to be explained to staff in academic and support lines.

- This can be done through a combination of institutional publications, a website and workshops.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 2: Collect results from enough students so that the information is usable at faculty and even departmental level

- Decisions about the SASSE sampling strategy are made collaboratively between each participating institutional representative and the research team.

- Institutions therefore have the opportunity to develop a sample that will be maximally representative of their student population.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 3: Understand what student engagement data do and do not represent, and use the results wisely

- In light of the "newness" of student engagement within the South African context it is essential to take time and involve the appropriately experienced staff within an institution to make the best use of the results.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 4: Report student engagement results in a responsible way

- Student engagement researchers emphasise the need for sharing the SASSE results in a way that leads to a better understanding of the complex nature of student success, helps to promote quality in higher education, and facilitates institutional improvement.

- The SASSE project encourages institutions to share their results in ways that lead to a better understanding of quality and that promote institutional improvement efforts.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 5: Don't allow the numbers to speak for themselves

- "Every number and comparison reported should be accompanied by an explanation and interpretation of what can and cannot be concluded from the results.

- Create opportunities for conversations that can help people better understand the results and their implications" (NSSE, 2006).

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 6: Always examine the results from multiple perspectives

- The SASSE institutional reports provide comparisons on the engagement indicators by institutional type and with the overall SASSE sample.

- Peer comparisons can be used to confirm or challenge assumptions about performance quality.

- It is important that an institution also considers a criterion-referenced view of student engagement in the context of the institution's mission.

- To facilitate this reflection, participant institutions are provided with their raw institutional data files.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 7: Link the results to other information about the student experience, institutional data and complementary initiatives

- Research on student engagement highlights the need for a systemic approach to addressing student engagement and success.

- The positive impact of student engagement results will be multiplied if the data is related to other institutional performance data which will make it more relevant to groups of staff working on different change initiatives around the campus.

Lessons learned: Taking action on results

STEP 8: Don't go it alone

- Higher education experts argue that the chances of successful innovation improve when institutional teams are formed and institutions work together on topics of mutual interest.

What have we learned about engagement and success from NSSE?

- Student learning and personal development are enhanced when students engage in educationally purposeful activities.

- At institutions where lecturers use effective educational practices more frequently in their classes, students are more engaged over all and gain more from university.

- Student engagement positively related to student grades and to persistence for all students.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING

South African Survey of Student Engagement

- Institutions can focus on **High Impact Pedagogical Practices** to increase **retention, persistence and student success**

Look at Handout #3, page 4

High Impact Pedagogical Practices

- Asked questions or contributed to module/subject discussions

- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment

- Explained module/subject material to other students

- Worked with other students on projects or assignments

High Impact Pedagogical Practices

- Gave a module/subject presentation

- Talked about career plans with a lecturer

- Worked with staff on activities outside academic work (committees, student groups, etc.)

- Discussed ideas with a lecturer outside of class

High Impact Pedagogical Practices

- Received detailed feedback shortly after you completed tests or assignments

- Had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity, from an economic background or with religious beliefs or political views other than your own

- Participated in a community-based project as part of module/subject

- Time spent studying, preparing academic work
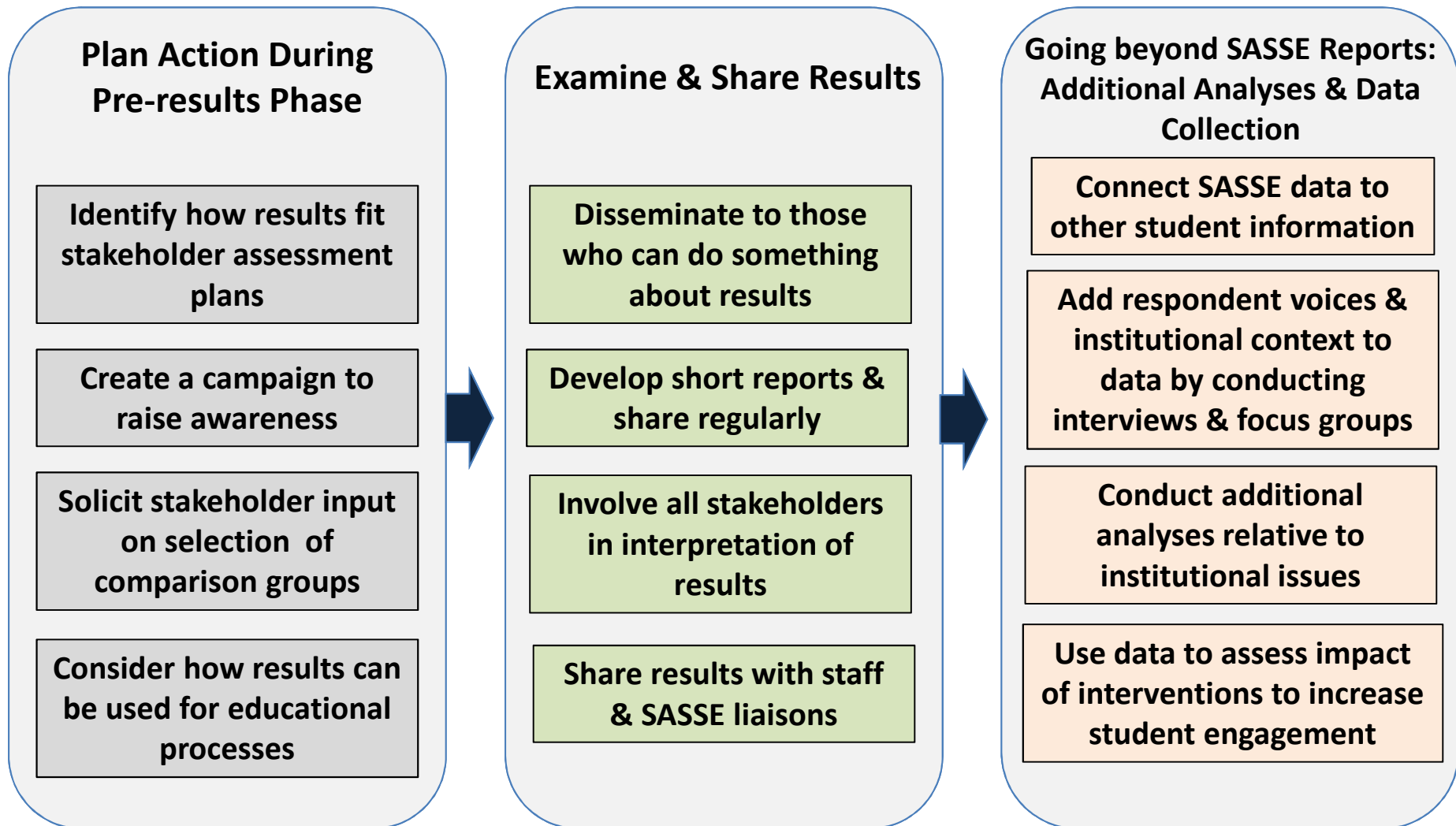
Let's think through one example

GAVE A MODULE/SUBJECT PRESENTATION

- Do we want all students to give module/subject presentations?

- Should students give presentations in all modules/subjects?

- What would it take to make this happen?

Collective wisdom from users: Moving from data to action

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LESSONS FROM THE FIELD FOR CREATING HIGH-IMPACT ENVIRONMENTS

High Impact Practices (HIPs)

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- "Science as Science Is Done"; Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects

High Impact Practices (HIPs)

Look at Handout #4

Key elements of HIPs

- **Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Interactions with staff and peers about substantive matters**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning**

Key elements of HIPs

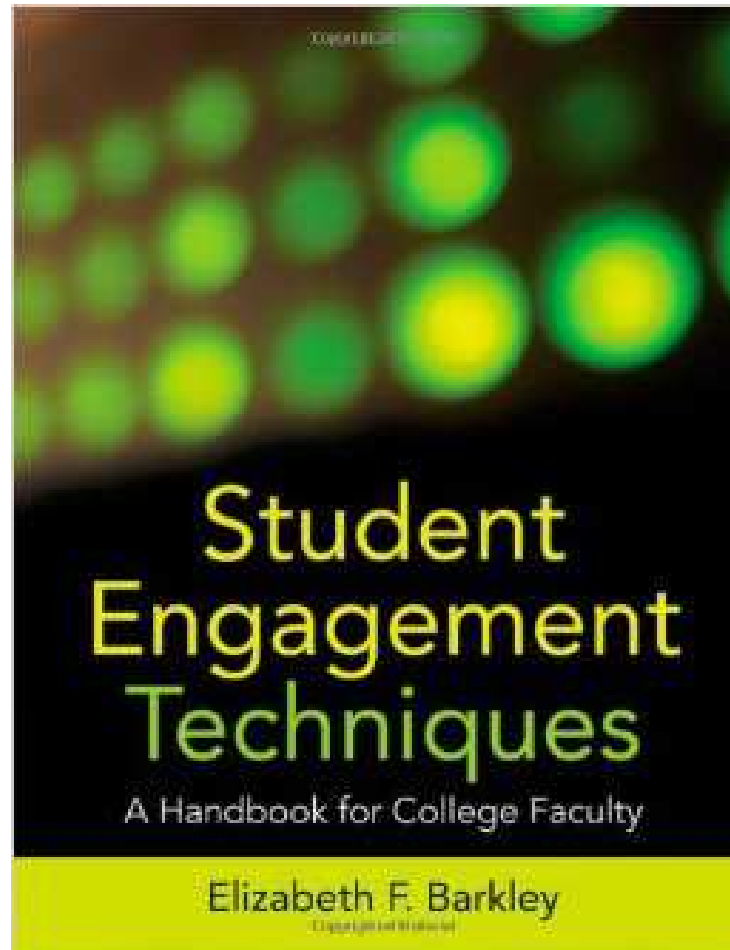- **Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications**

Key elements of HIPs

- **Public demonstration of competence**

Student Engagement Techniques

7 Research-Based Principles

- **Strength** of the seven principles:
  - Draws on research and literature from cognitive, developmental, and social psychology, anthropology, education and diversity studies,
- The principles are:
  1. **Domain-independent:** They apply equally well across all subject areas; the fundamental factors that impact the way students learn transcend disciplinary differences.
  2. **Experience-independent:** The principles apply to all educational levels and pedagogical situations.
  3. **Cross-culturally relevant:** All the research identified has been conducted primarily in the Western world, faculty colleagues in other countries have resonated with the principles, finding them relevant to their own classes and students.
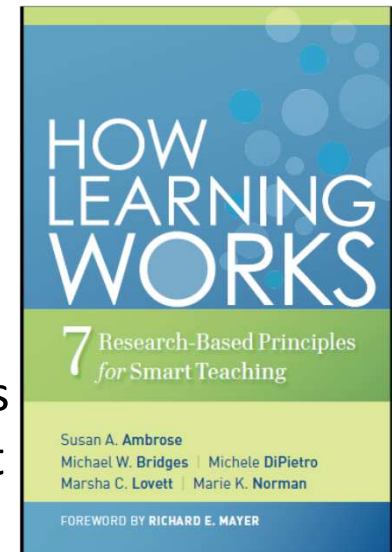
7 Research-Based Principles

- **Principles of Learning:**

  1. Students' prior knowledge can help or hinder learning

  2. How students organize knowledge influences how they learn and apply what they know

  3. Students' motivation determines, directs, and sustains what they do to learn.

  4. To develop mastery, students must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned.

7 Research-Based Principles

- **Principles of Learning:**

  5. Goal-directed practice coupled with targeted feedback enhances the quality of students' learning.

  6. Students' current level of development interacts with the social, emotional, and intellectual climate of the course to impact learning.

  7. To become self-directed learners, students must learn to monitor and adjust their approaches to learning.

Please complete…

Handout #5 – Background

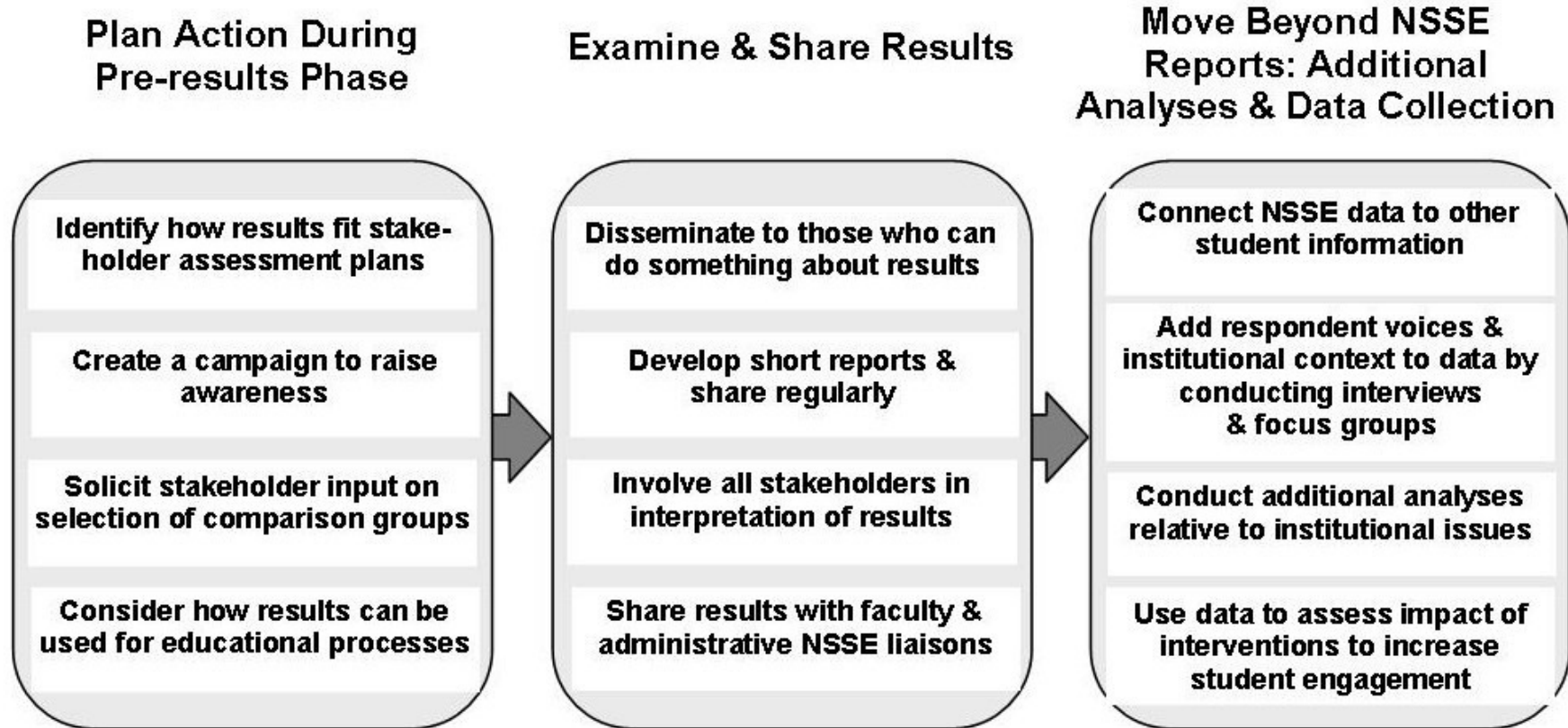## Handout #6 – Evaluation Form

Thank You
Dankie

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