Assessment in Technical Services

Jessica Schomberg
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Introduction

Content

- Categories
- Tools and Methods
- Decision-Making
Categories

- Quality control
- Efficiency and production
- Cost
- Workflows and organizational structure
- Workplace culture
- Usability
- Training and development
- Administration
Reflection questions 1

• What assessment categories are you most interested in researching?
• What assessment categories do you have the most experience with?
Methods

Quantitative (numerical)
• Cost accounting
• Performance indicators
• Examining log data to quantify types of searches users do
• Surveys

Qualitative (narrative)
• Ethnography
• Observation
• In-depth interview
• Focus groups
• Case study
Tools

Quality management processes
• ISO 9001 quality certification
• Balanced scorecard

Production methods
• Time-and-path
• Identify and distinguish between workflow vs non-workflow tasks

Workplace culture
• ClimateQual

Customer satisfaction
• TS and Library Systems Customer Service Assessment survey
Reflection questions 2

What assessment tools or methods would you use to respond to these scenarios?

• You want to check error rates in a shared cataloging environment
• You want to prioritize staff-training needs
• You want to do user experience studies related to a certain area of cataloging (Description, Subject analysis, Classification)
• You need to justify hiring a new cataloger
Decision-Making

Assessment-based or data-based decision-making often follows a logical process based on explicit goals and objectives.

1. Know what your objectives are.
2. Identify appropriate tools and methods.
3. Clarify how your assessment choices will tell you whether you achieved your desired objectives.

If objectives change, evaluation methods should change
Reflection questions 3

Think about how your organization engages in assessment:

• Does your organization have stated objectives?
• Do you make decisions about what to assess based on those stated objectives?
• Do you use assessment data to target improvements in the areas you’re assessing?
• Is assessment data cherry-picked to justify unrelated decisions?
Q&A and Closing

Contact Information
email: jessica.schomberg@mnsu.edu
twitter: @schomj

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Bibliography of Cataloging Assessment Readings