DPI does Delphi

A presentation to the Australasian Evaluation Society Conference
Canberra, September 2009

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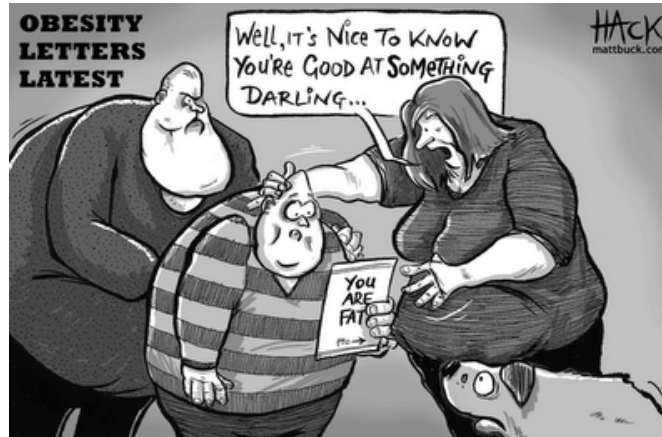
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Presentation overview

- Evaluation Capability Building
- Needs Assessment
- Delphi Technique
- DPI example
- Learnings

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Evaluation Capability Building

Needs Assessment

1. determining the What Should Be (target) status
2. ascertaining the What Is (actual) status
3. quantifying discrepancies between What Should Be and What Is
4. analysing the causes of discrepancies
5. establishing priorities

Witkin & Altschuld 1995

Delphi Technique

Delphi Technique

THE PROCESS

Like other techniques, the Delphi has three general steps: planning, carrying out the survey, and follow-up. We present a brief outline as an overview and then follow with details for each major step.

1.0 Plan the Delphi.
1.1 Determine the purpose for which information is required.
1.2 Identify a panel of respondents that could produce that information.
1.3 Contact the panel members and solicit their participation.
2.0 Carry out the survey.
2.1 Develop initial open-ended questions for the first survey (Q1).
2.2 Send Q1 to panelists and collect completed forms.
2.3 Analyze the results of Q1 and structure a scaled survey (Q2) from emergent ideas based on Q1 responses.
2.4 Send Q2 to respondents and collect completed Q2s.
2.5 Analyze Q2 and then send the results (Q3) to respondents showing three types of information for each item: the group median, a group measure of spread (Q), and the individual responses to each item. Respondents rerate each item. If their rating is not in agreement with that of the total panel (i.e., in the range of the median plus or minus one Q), they are asked to supply reasons for their disagreement.
2.6 Analyze Q3 and consider the option of repeating (iterating) the process by means of Q4.
3.0 Summarize and report the findings of the Delphi process.

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING NEEDS ASSESSMENTS
A Practical Guide

Belle Ruth Witkin
James W. Altschuld
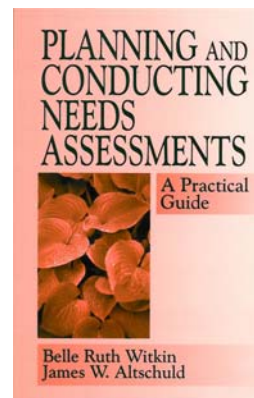
1995 p. 194

DPI Delphi

Participants

Round 1   Initial question

"What would strong evaluation capability within DPI's Agriculture and Fisheries Group look like?"

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DPI Delphi

Round 2

"Which of the following 10 statements do you believe are important for a strong evaluation capability in DPI's Agriculture and Fisheries Group?"

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DPI Delphi

Round 3

- total points allocated to each statement
- number of people who allocated points for each statement
- all comments made to justify choices
- respondent's original points for comparison

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Results

Results from rounds 2 and 3

Number	Statement	R2 % points	R3 % points
5	AFG should have clear guidelines detailing organisational expectations for all aspects of evaluation.	13.2	18.4
6	AFG should have streams of timely evaluation information continuously being used by decision makers at all levels of the organisation.	12.4	16.8
1	AFG should be able to show it is delivering social, economic and environmental benefits for the community of interest.	11.6	11.1
3	Evaluation capability should be distributed across AFG Divisions with leadership provided by a core group of evaluation specialists.	10.4	10.5
7	AFG should have ongoing evaluation capability building in a variety of forms including technical advice, support materials, training, communities of practice, mentoring and supportive organisational structures.	11.2	8.4
4	AFG should have an accessible store of evaluation information, including previously collected data and examples of tendering documents, evaluation plans and reports.	9.6	7.9
10	AFG should have a core of evaluation specialists to advocate for evaluation, build capability and provide support for all staff across the organisation.	10.4	7.9
8	AFG should be using a variety of forms of evaluation at different levels of the organisation to suit different purposes.	8.8	7.4
9	Evaluation should be valued at all levels of AFG.	8.0	7.4
2	Each Project Assessment Group should be responsible for resourcing evaluations.	4.4	4.2

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Agreement

Final points for all statements by level
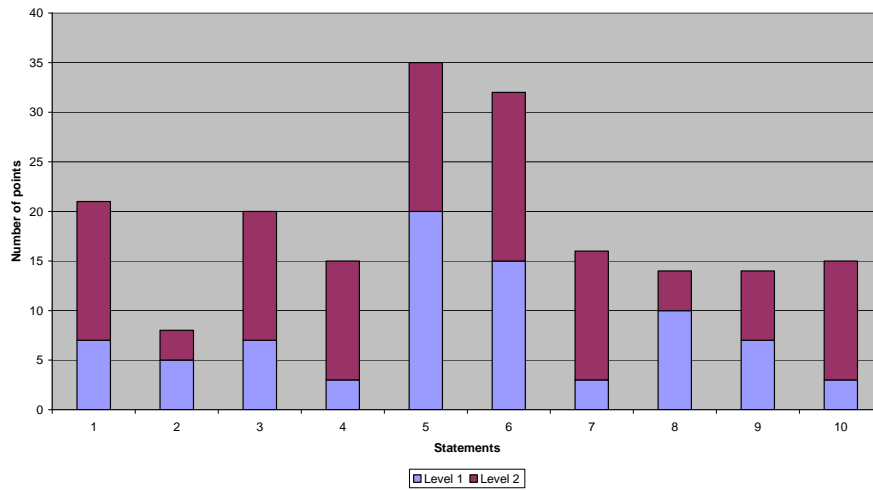
Value of the comments

High

AFG should have clear guidelines detailing organisational expectations for all aspects of evaluation.
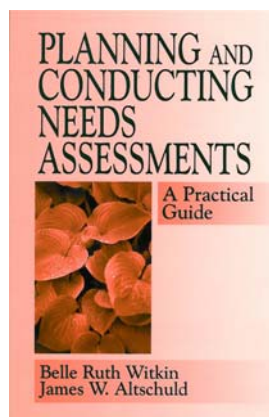
Low

AFG should be using a variety of forms of evaluation at different levels of the organisation to suit different purposes.

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Learnings

Initial question

"What would strong evaluation capability within DPI's Agriculture and Fisheries Group look like?"

By the book

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING NEEDS ASSESSMENTS
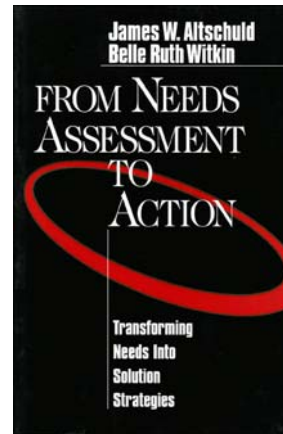A Practical Guide

Belle Ruth Witkin
James W. Altschuld

1995

"Too often, however, comparisons are made on noncomparable items, such as importance of an objective versus perceived achievement." (p 60)

"*(The NA written survey) is usually not an appropriate vehicle for directly determining discrepancies, that is, by seeking responses simultaneously to 'what is' and 'what should be ' questions." (p 129)*

"We do not usually recommend a two-response format for surveys (judging 'what is' and 'what should be' on the same instrument)." (p 142)

By the book

"Well-constructed NA surveys contain (at a minimum) double-scaled items that ask for ratings about current and desired status, in accord with the definition of need (the measurable discrepancy between…). With two scores for each item, it is possible to calculate a numerical discrepancy or an index of need." (p 53)

James W. Altschuld
Belle Ruth Witkin

FROM NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO ACTION

Transforming Needs Into Solution Strategies

2000

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Warnings

". . . danger of the Delphi technique deriving collective ignorance rather than wisdom"

Jones and Hunter 1996

". . . what appears to be a high level of consensus might also be interpreted as the lowest common denominator of opinion"

Critcher & Gladstone 1998

". . . the Delphi method is an aid to decision making and not a substitute for it"

Critcher & Gladstone 1998

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Next steps

Strategic level ECB needs

Current capability

Gap analysis

Reality check

ECB Plan

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Questions

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Findings - participation

Participation by Round by Level

	Round 1	Round 2		Round 3	Overall Response rate
Level 1 (N=47)	8	11		8	17%
Level 2 (N=33)	12	14		11	33%
Totals (N=80)	20	25	Total (N=25)	19	24%
Response rate by Round	25%	31%		76%	24%

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