Four Practical Strategies for Developing a Positive Data Culture

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Agenda

1. About Amelia & NASPA

2. Current Trends in Assessment

3. Types of Data Available to Policymakers

4. Four Practical Strategies for Developing a Positive Data Culture

5. Friendly Reminders

6. Two Discussions

7. Resources

8. Questions

About NASPA

- **History**
  Founded in 1919 as the Conference of Deans and Advisors of Men

  Renamed in 1951 as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

- **Governance**
  21-member Board of Directors

  Current Strategic Plan goes through 2026

- **Membership**
  Over 14,000 individuals and 2,200 campuses

  7 regions; 7 divisions

  30+ knowledge communities

- **Operations**
  65 staff across the United States

  Office in Washington, DC

- **Resources**
  Conferences; Virtual Learning; Community Engagement; Research, Policy, and Advocacy; Publications and More

- **Key Connections**
  Council of Higher Education Management Associations

  Student Affairs in Higher Education Consortium

  Washington Higher Education Secretariat

What does it mean to pivot?

(in business) - to completely change the way in which one does something

What is a pivot?

A **pivot** is the central point, pin, or shaft on which a mechanism turns or oscillates.

oscillate: to move or swing back and forth at a regular speed

Pivoting can sometimes provide flexibility

A **pivot** stance in basketball allows one to dribble, pass, or shoot.

We can use data to lead, partner, and support in many ways.

Current Trends in Assessment

We are assessing many things!

- **Student Learning**

  Discipline-based courses

  Co-curricular learning

  Prior learning assessment

- **Finance and Operations**

  Resource Allocations (balancing micro and macro solutions)

  Technology (capacity to leverage multiple systems efficiently)

  Strategic Communication (effectiveness of messaging)

- **Human Resources**

  Salary and Compensation (pay scales, market alignment)

  Work/Life Integration (evolution and evaluation of work schedules and locations)

  Stress Testing (stay interviews, exit interviews, contingency planning)

- **Policies and Procedures**

  Free Speech

  Health, Safety, and Wellness

Types of Data Available to Policymakers

Descriptive
Action:
Reporting

Key Question: What happened?

Diagnostic
Action:
Analysis

Key Question: Why did it happen?

Real-Time
Action:
Monitoring

Key Question: What is happening?

Predictive
Action: **Forecasting**

Key Question: What will happen?
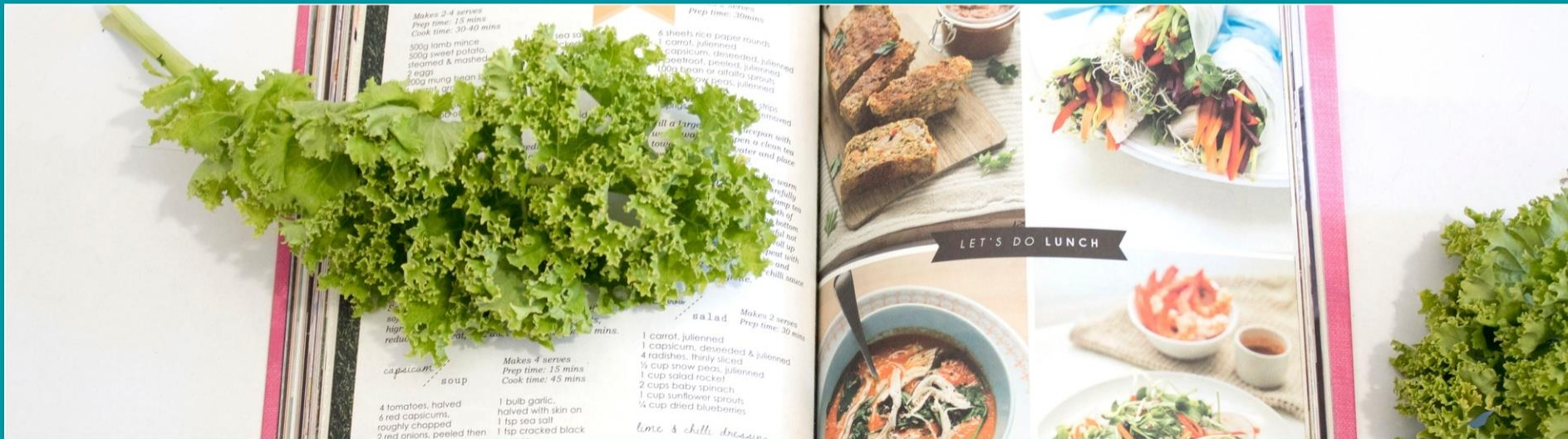
Prescriptive
Action: **Impact**

Key Question: What should be done?

Four Practical Strategies for Developing a Positive Data Culture

Strategy 1: Manage Routines and Innovation

Managing Routines and Innovation

Key Considerations

✔ Remembering lessons from previous strategies and related programs, instruction, initiatives, and services

✔ Sequencing daily activities

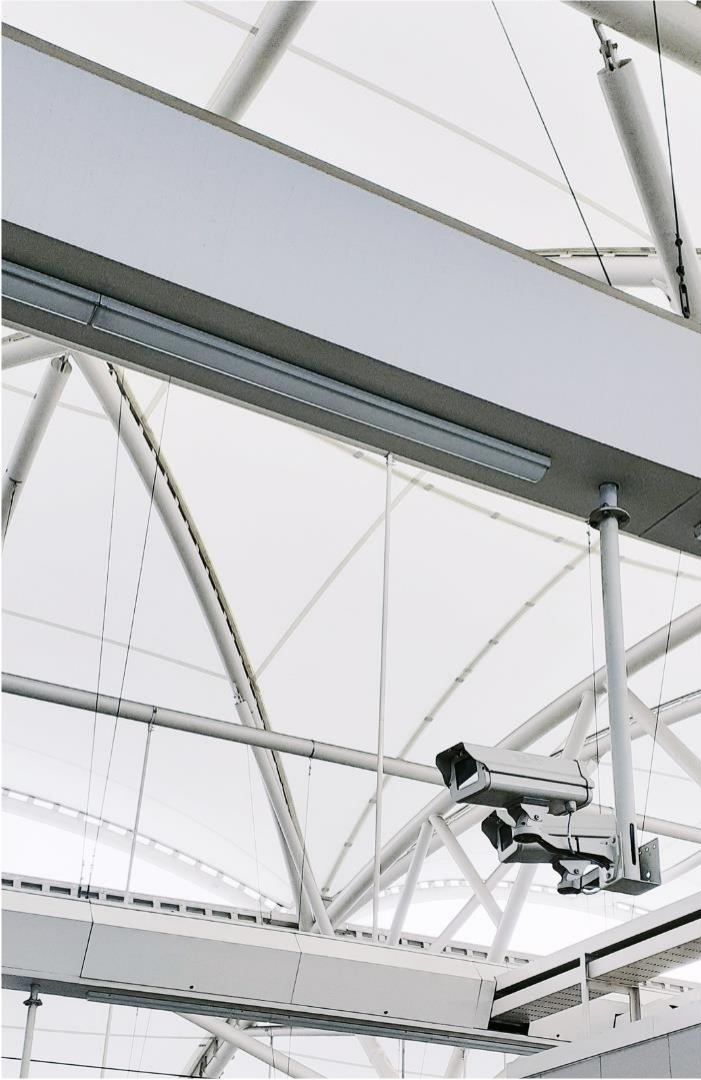✔ Allocating resources in anticipation of future needs

Friendly Reminder
Change takes time.

Strategy 2: Balance Privacy and Proactivity

Balancing Privacy and Proactivity

Key Considerations

- ✔ Timing, tone, and method of messages
- ✔ Sharing strategic decisions with students
- ✔ Using students' feedback to refine processes

Friendly Reminder
Assess needs, processes, and outcomes.

Discussion 1
The Intersection of Needs, Processes, and Outcomes

Using Data to Address Needs

What is one need that your program or service currently addresses?

Using Data to Address Processes

How often do you evaluate the process by which your program or service addresses that need?

Using Data to Address Outcomes

What is one outcome of your program or service about which you are pleased? What is one outcome that you desire to help improve?

Next Steps to Pursue

What type of data (descriptive, diagnostic, real-time, predictive, or prescriptive) would you like to access?

Please select a colleague and discuss the questions above.

Strategy 3: Understand Your Data Identity

The Data Identity Framework

A Six-Component Guide to Help You Find Your Data-Related Strengths

2 Important Assumptions

- **Every higher education professional**, regardless of their role, can find a use for data in their daily work.

- The most ideal climate for successful data work is one that promotes **open communication**, **supportive sharing of progress and results**, and **ongoing collaboration**.

The Data Identity Framework

Curiosity & Inquiry
Ability to Formulate and Ask Clear Questions

Research & Analysis
Ability to Select and Use Appropriate Methodologies

Communication & Consultation
Ability to Clearly Discuss Findings with Multiple Audiences

Campus Context
Knowledge of Current Issues and Trends within the Institution

Industry Context
Knowledge of Current Issues and Trends in Higher Education

Strategy & Planning
Ability to Select and Execute a Course of Action

Parnell (2021). You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus.

Data Identity Framework Sub-Components

Curiosity and Inquiry
Issue Clarity
Question Formation
Historical Context
Stakeholder Impact

Research and Analysis
Methodology
Technical Expertise
Data Integration
Computation

Communication and Consultation
Delivery Type
Audience
Interpretation
Follow-Up

Parnell (2021). You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus.
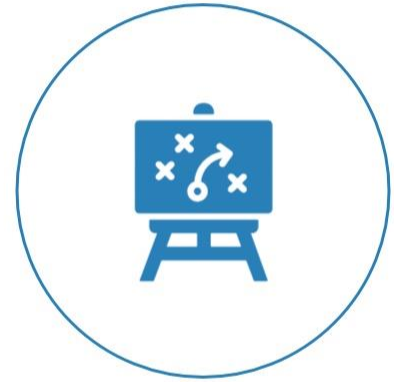
Data Identity Framework Sub-Components

Campus Context
Student Information
Programs and Initiatives
Strategic Plan
Campus Mission

Industry Context
News and Events
Sector Knowledge
Functional Knowledge
Student Trends

Strategy and Planning
Role Alignment
Project Management
Resource Allocation
Progress Monitoring

Parnell (2021). You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus.

Understanding the Framework: 4 Principles

- Each component is a valuable part of one's data identity. Therefore, the components are not provided in a sequential or ranking order.

- Within each component, some professionals will have much more experience and knowledge while others have less.

- All 6 components are valuable to engaging in collaborative work on a campus.

- The level and frequency at which professionals engage in activities related to each component will vary.

Parnell (2021). You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus.

Example Personas (3 of 15)

The Curator

Research and Analysis +
Communication and
Consultation

The Connector

Curiosity and Inquiry + Campus
Context

The Mission Monitor

Strategy and Planning +
Campus Context

Parnell (2021). You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus.

Investment

Professionals who have **emerging ability** will likely engage in certain activities on occasion and at a novice level.

Those who have a **developing ability** will do so **more frequently** and at a level of some responsibility.

Those who have a **strong ability** will perform certain skills and abilities on an **ongoing** basis and, in some instances, at a level that is consistently a model for others to follow.

While some levels of ability reflect a greater investment of time, **few should require** a more **significant** investment of **financial resources**.

Individual Experiences

There are natural connections between component areas. For example, professionals who understand current campus issues and trends are well-positioned to recognize changes to the pace and flow of campus activities.

There are connections between subcomponent areas. For example, in the Strategy and Planning area, project management, if done well, can help ensure that resource allocations are projected and delivered at optimal levels.
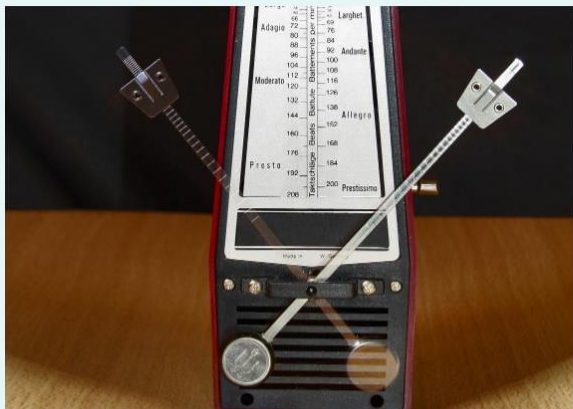
When professionals change roles, responsibilities, or institutions, some of their self-assessments will also likely change. This is especially relevant for Campus Context.
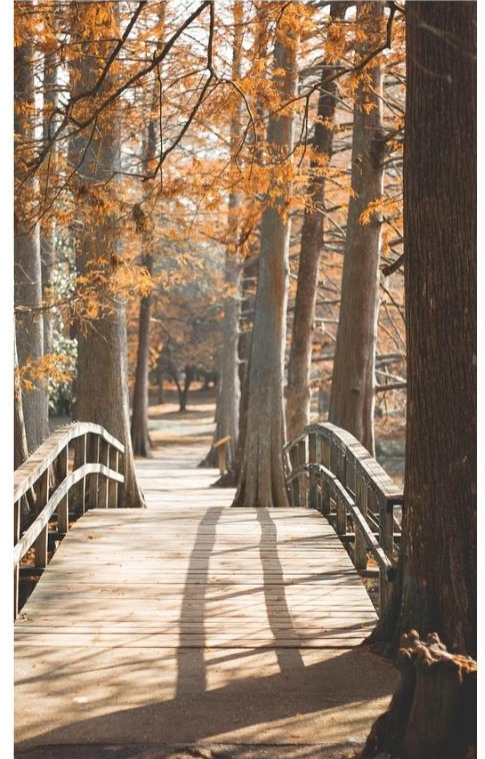
Discussion 2
Establishing Data Connections

Area of Emerging or Developing Ability

Which of the 6 components of the Data Identity Framework would you like to strengthen?

Area of Strong Ability

Which of the 6 components of the Data Identity Framework would you be comfortable helping a colleague develop?

Opportunity for Collaboration

What is one type of information that you refer to weekly? How could it connect to your partner's goals?

Please select a colleague and discuss the questions above.
(Note: the 6 areas of the Data Identity Framework are Curiosity and Inquiry; Research and Analysis; Communication and Consultation; Industry Context; Campus Context; and Strategy and Planning.)

Friendly Reminder

Once you've seen one campus, you've seen one campus.

Strategy 4: Remember the Critical Culture Areas

Critical Culture Areas to Address

Competition

For attention, accolades, or resources

Politics

Exclusive opportunities, side deals, and rapidly-changing goals

Denial

Spin toward the positive and overuse of anecdotes

Wrap Up

Additional Resources

- **Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning**
  Bowen and Watson (2024)

- **The Transformative Potential of AI in Student Affairs: Recommendations for Student Affairs Leaders**
  Brady (2024)

- **Student Success Hub**
  NACUBO (2024)

- **Becoming a Student-Ready College: A New Culture of Leadership for Student Success, 2nd Edition**
  McNair, Albertine, McDonald, Major Jr., and Cooper (2022)

Friendly Reminder
Celebrate successes.
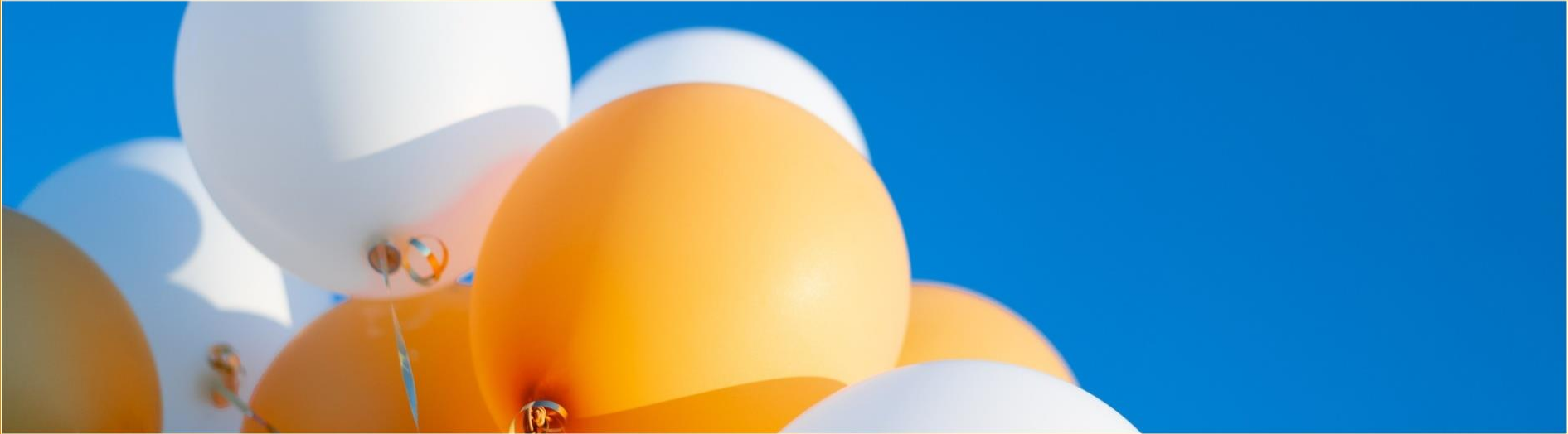
Questions?

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