Executive Summary

An Evaluation Readiness Assessment—Prioritizing Efforts to Measure Effectiveness

October 2, 2018
Moderator(s): Gloria Salas-Kos
Speaker(s): Wayne Gordon, Karen Armstrong, and Gary Kamimura

The Evaluation Readiness Assessment (ERA): A WIOA Quick Start Action Planner is one of three new U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) resources available to support research and evaluation activities. Together with the Evaluation Toolkit, the ERA helps State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) and other entities gauge their capacity to conduct research activities to meet the evaluation requirement in WIOA, incorporate existing research and evaluations into program policy and planning to meet the evidence-based requirement in WIOA, and to evaluate for continuous program and performance improvement.

The ERA tool contains statements that cover five elements to build or enhance research and evaluation capacity. These evaluation elements follow a framework to assess organizational strengths and challenges in the following areas:

- Evaluation culture and awareness
- Funding strategies
- Data management
- Staff skills, capacity, and awareness
- Strategic planning

Gary Kamimura, from the Washington State Employment Security Department, describes how the tool is used to inform important next steps toward building a stronger evaluation culture in the state. State program and evaluation staff at the SWA, partner agencies, and the State Workforce Agency Board took part in the assessment. Findings and actions identified from their assessment demonstrate efforts to:

- Acknowledge research and evaluation strengths and needs for improvement,
- Elevate the assessment conversation to leaders, and
- Encourage adequate fund research and evaluation efforts.

The webinar ends with a challenge to attendees to conduct their own evaluation readiness assessment.

Run of Show

Welcome and Moderator Introduction 0:10
New Community of Practice 0:46
Objectives 2:30
Speaker Introductions 3:12
Evaluation Readiness Assessment: Background and Context 3:36
  - Setting the Context 3:53
  - Mission 5:52
What is the Evaluation Readiness Assessment Tool? 8:10
  - Rely on Assessing Evaluation Capacity 10:31
  - Tour of the Tool 11:00
  - How to Use the Assessment 13:10
Assessing Evaluation Readiness: A State’s Perspective 15:12
  - Reactions to the Assessment 16:13
  - How We Used the Assessment Tool 16:48
  - What We Learned from Our Assessment 18:56
  - What’s Next 23:13
Accept the Challenge 25:08
Resources 28:04