

The What and How of Assessing Best Practices

An “Enterprise-wide” View

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Best Practices

There exists a significant body of association best practices, processes, and guidelines from which an organization can choose



...but it is spread from pillar to post with no central repository and, as a result, it is not always easily accessible

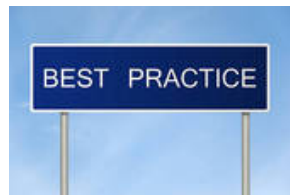
You can improve much faster if you don't have to think up all the good stuff yourself.





According to the American Productivity & Quality Center, the three main barriers to adoption of a best practice are:

1. a lack of *knowledge* about best practices,
2. a lack of *motivation* to make changes involved in their adoption, and
3. a lack of *knowledge* and *skills* required to do so.



- What is the difference between a common practice and a best practice? ...and where does conventional wisdom fit into the equation?



What is “common” practice?

definition –

- 1 : matter of course, customary or regular procedure, natural state, routine, or usual practice suitable to many: as adapted to or indicative of the understanding of many
- 2 : frequently encountered or widely accepted
- 3 : commonly liked or approved

Adoption of *common practice* happens when people are uncertain what to do. When the right thing is unclear, it is generally safer to copy others.



“Oh come on, it's common practice!”

Mothers are great critical thinkers.

"If everyone else jumped off a bridge, would you jump off the bridge, too?" This is one of the best replies to a misleading appeal to *common practice*, in which an action is justified because...

"everyone is doing it."

Tradition!

Another form of *common practice* is an erroneous appeal to tradition. Instead of using the justification, "Everyone is doing it," in appeal to tradition, the rationalization is...

"We've always done it that way."



What is “conventional wisdom”?

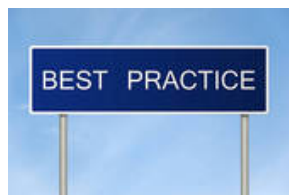
definition –

a term used to describe ideas or explanations that are generally accepted as true by the public or by experts in a field. The term implies that the ideas or explanations, though widely held, are unexamined and, hence, may be reevaluated upon further examination or as events unfold.

- Not necessarily true
- Often seen as an obstacle
- Applied or implied pejoratively
- Used as a gauge of normative behavior or belief
- Sometimes the stuff of legends



What is a best practice?



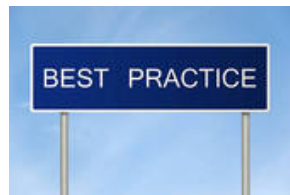
What is “best practice”?

definition –

A best practice is a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. A commitment to using the best practices in any field is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one's disposal to ensure success.

Best practice is a superior method or innovative practice that contributes to the improved performance of an organization, usually recognized as “best” by other peer organizations. It implies accumulating and applying knowledge about what is working and not working in different situations and contexts, including lessons learned and the continuing process of learning, feedback, reflection and analysis (what works, how and why).

(Project Management Glossary)

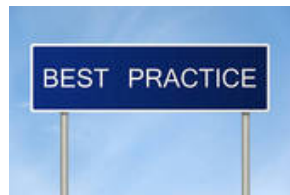


- What is the difference between a common practice and a best practice? ...and where does conventional wisdom fit into the equation?
- Where do best practices come from?



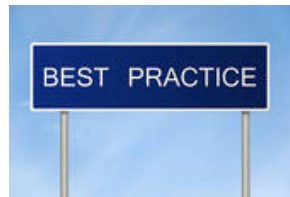


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- Where do best practices come from?
- **How and when and who declares a practice ... a best practice?**

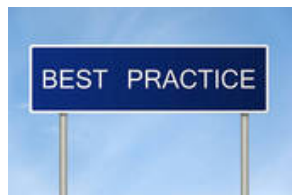


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- **How can organizations determine which practices are appropriate and effective...in other words...the best?**





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- Where do best practices come from?
- How and when and who declares a practice ... a best practice?
- How can organizations determine which practices are appropriate and effective...in other words...the best?
- **How can the “digitalNOW community” become a central repository for *association best practices*.**



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What motivates an organization to choose best practice(s)?

- Legislation and/or regulation
- Industry guidelines / benchmarks

Should organizations choose best practices for reasons other than governmental decrees or because they are industry standards?



What motivates an organization to choose best practice(s)?

Yes!

Examples include:

- To better align your people, your processes, and your resources with your stakeholder needs to achieve your vision and goals
- To build an enterprise that can achieve sustainable results in today's changing association environment?
- To create more value
- To take the lead in innovation
- To effect change
- **What are some other reasons?**





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Organizational Assessment



Organizational Assessment - a process to look at various areas of an organization in regards to what is working and what could be different that enables management to leverage its current assets as well as choose to do some things differently in order to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.



Three Approaches to Organizational Assessment

Traditional

- Assessment is ad-hoc typically in organizational silos
- Does not take note of interrelationships and interdependencies
- Assessment results rarely considered in strategy, operations, and financial planning

Integrated

- Assessment partially integrated – 2 or more silos
- Some crossover of interdependencies with select business units
- Assessment results included in some decision-making and planning activities

Enterprise

- Portfolio view organizational assessment
- Includes all interrelationships and interdependencies
- Assessment results imbedded in planning, *best practices*, performance measurement, and evaluation



An Enterprise Assessment:

- **Is a proactive, coordinated and sustainable approach that includes methods and processes to help associations succeed *as a collective entity versus an organization of silos.***
- **Provides a framework for associations to make informed choices when identifying, selecting, and implementing best practices with a “portfolio” or “enterprise-wide” view.**



What Can an Enterprise Assessment Do for You?

- Improve your ability to govern well and manage effectively within and across business units.
- Help set priorities and build effective leadership teams.
- Clarify decision-making processes.
- Improve your capacity to identify and implement *best practices* and *next practices*.
- Create the necessary environment to seize opportunities inherent in future events.
- Establish relevant and appropriate evaluation processes at all levels of the association.



What Can an Enterprise Assessment Do for You?

- Facilitate communication by providing a common language and understanding.
- Identify the interrelationships and interdependencies throughout the enterprise.
- Better define roles, relationships, and responsibilities and align your people, processes, and resources with stakeholders and your vision and goals.
- Guide change based on *what you actually know* as opposed to *what you think you know*.
- Build an organization that can achieve sustainable results in today's dynamic association environment.



Association Total Enterprise Assessment Method

A TEAM Approach

The Ten Key Assessment Criteria
(including 18 sub criteria and over 400 guidelines)

- I. Governance and Leadership**
- II. Planning and Assessment**
- III. Clarity, Transparency, and Compliance**
- IV. Stakeholders**
- V. Programs and Relationships**
- VI. Communications**
- VII. Public Policy and Advocacy**
- VIII. Human Resources**
- IX. Finance**
- X. Technology**



Questions?



Thank You!

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