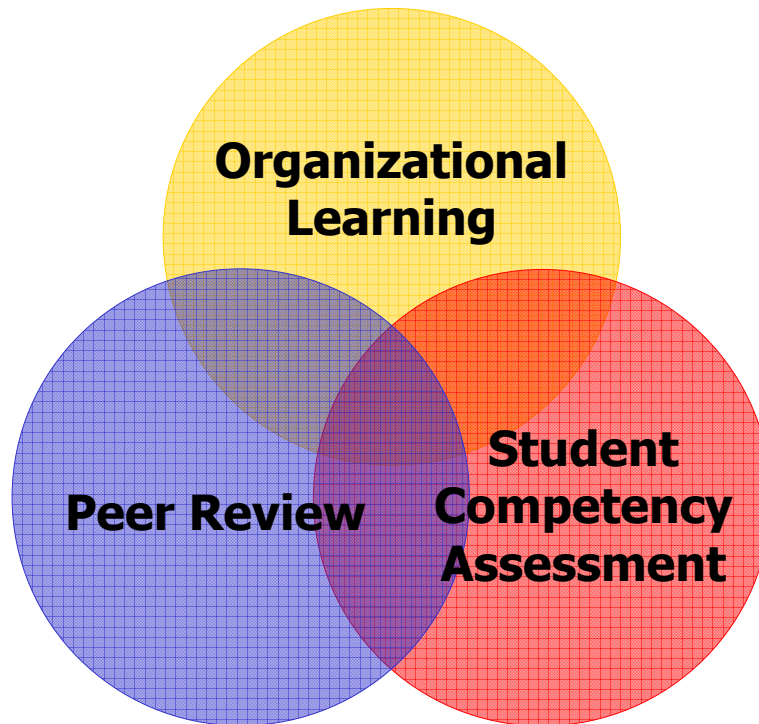


Reviewing Plans to Assess Student Competency: Peer Review and Organizational Learning

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Presentation

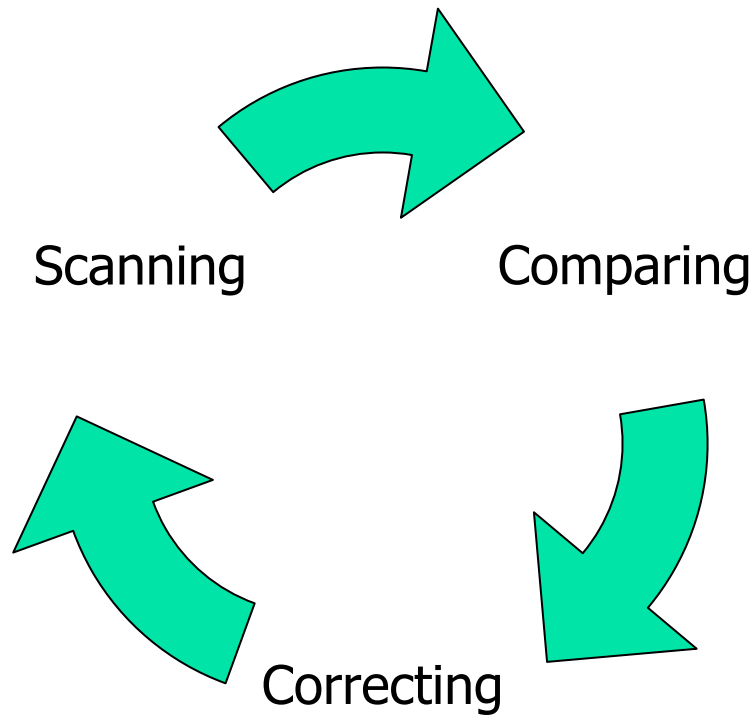


Organizational Learning

- Organizations “learn”
- Virginia assessment professionals as a *community of practice* (AKA, an organization)
- Negative feedback



Negative Feedback



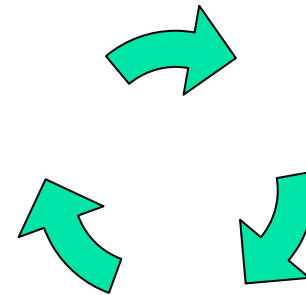
Peer Review in Higher Education

- award research funds
- evaluate academic publications
- review for tenure and promotion
- grant regional and disciplinary accreditation



Peer Review

- Encourages critical examination
- Promotes the exchange of ideas
- Reduces non-academic interference
- Guides academic discourse
- Reinforces academic values



Community of
Practice



Peer Review: *What is it good for?*

- Encourages discourse
- Determines validity and credibility
- Detects limitations and contradictions
- Makes judgments
- Provides mutual beneficial



Criticism of Peer Review

- Suppresses Innovation
- Promotes cliques
- Irreproducibility



Competency Assessment

- §23-9.6.1.10 Develop...guidelines for the assessment of student achievement...consistent with the institution's mission and educational objectives [and] report the institutions' assessment biennial[ly].



Former Process

- Plans reviewed by a panel of SCHEV staff
- Sought detached objectivity



Assessing Quality in Higher Education

- Current policy in VA requires assessment of student achievement.
- Calls for accountability are growing louder
- Peer Review was identified as the preferred method of assessing quality (Banta, et al 1996) when compared to state mandated tests of student competence.



Comparing Peer Review to Non-Peer Review

- Peer Review Results
 - Greater frequency of comments
 - Greater specificity of comments
- Similarities
 - Unilateral exchange of information
- Possibility of bilateral exchange



Peer Review: the preferred choice?

- If peer review is preferred to non-peer review:
 - What can be done to improve the peer review process?
 - What will be lost if non-peer review is eliminated?



Improving Peer Review

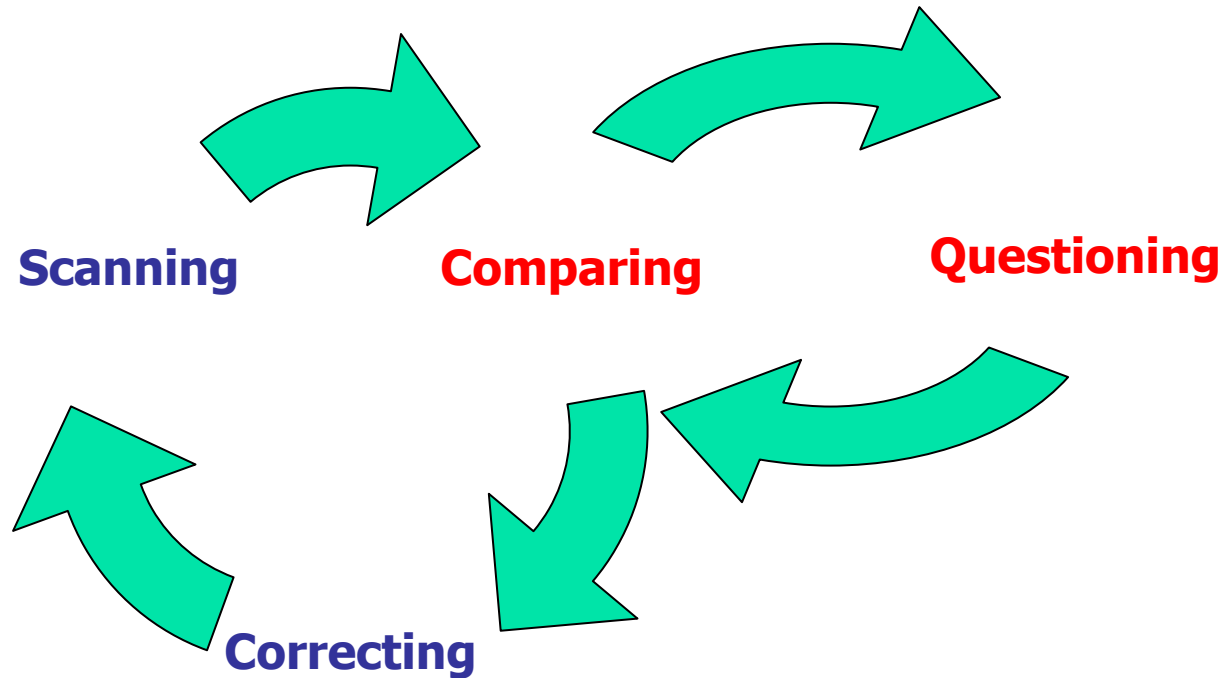
- Identify its function
- Identify an appropriate means for carrying out that function
- Communicate the process to participants
- Manage the flow of information



What benefits are not realized?



Return to Organizational Learning



Sources

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