



Utilizing Evaluation Data for Continuous Program Improvement

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Welcome!

Session Overview



- Introductions
- Factors that Contribute to Effective Use of Data
- Effective Methods for Data Use
- Team Session - Strategies
- Action Planning
- Q & A



Who We Are

CoBro Consulting



- ✓ CoBro Consulting is a research and consulting firm providing data management and evaluation services for college access programs nationwide.
 - Data management via Compass and CompassMatch
 - Program evaluation
 - Statistical data analysis
 - Survey design, analysis, & reporting
 - Comprehensive annual and biennial evaluation reports



Who We Are

CoBro Consulting



- ✓ **Compass** is a secure student tracking system and database management tool that expedites data entry, runs reports and analyses, and generates APR data tables at the click of a button.
- ✓ **CompassMatch** is an in-kind contribution management system that allows you to easily record, calculate, and run reports of matching funds.

CoBro Consulting currently serves 38 GEAR UP state and partnership programs, nation-wide.

Who We Are

Utah GEAR UP State Grant



- ✓ Grant period: 2011-2018
- ✓ Total award: \$26 million
- ✓ Average annual budget: \$ 3.7 million
- ✓ Implementation Model: Priority
- ✓ Number of Students Served: 3368
- ✓ Number of Schools: 50
- ✓ Number of Districts: 14
- ✓ Primary partners: 3 Higher Ed, 1 Community-Based

Who We Are

Utah GEAR UP State Grant



Individualized Services

- ✓ Tutoring and mentoring
- ✓ Academic counseling
- ✓ College-readiness preparation
- ✓ Parent and family support
- ✓ Financial-aid assistance
- ✓ First-year college services
- ✓ Financial literacy education
- ✓ Program evaluation and data gathering

Who are You?

(GEAR UP Session Participants)

- ✓ Are you new to GEAR UP?
- ✓ Do you have a new 2011 or 2012 grant?
- ✓ Have you been with GEAR UP for more than a year?
- ✓ ...more than five?

A lot of collective knowledge in the room!



Session Outcomes



- ✓ Understand factors that contribute to effective data use.
- ✓ Identify effective methods in using data beyond required ED reporting.
- ✓ Participate in active discussion regarding optimal strategies for implementing data-driven recommendations and create an action plan.

Why is this important?



Recently, federal programs have embraced a common theme of data-driven decision making and the creation of a culture of evidence to promote formative program improvement.



Contributing Factors



✓ Factors that Contribute to Effective Use of Data:

- Relevant & measurable objectives
- Accurate & timely student-level academic data
- A systematic approach to collecting service data
- Accurate & timely reporting via clear, concise outcome reports
- Wide & frequent dissemination of findings
- Methods to modify program based on findings



Effective Methods

Utah GEAR UP State Grant



✓ Gathering Data

- Collect accurate, timely data
- Train all staff to be responsible for data collection
- Dedicate specific staff to coordinating data efforts
- Provide adequate administrative staff
- Have responsive, experienced external evaluators
- Standardize data practices and forms across program
- Keep multiple sites consistent through internal audits
- Provide calendar of when specific data is due

Effective Methods

Utah GEAR UP State Grant



✓ Using Data to Improve Practice

- Disseminate findings back to staff, schools, and public
- Identify best practices
- Modify and evolve services
- Provide feedback to staff
- Share data and data gathering practices
- Participate with state data alliance

Other Uses of Data



- ✓ Additional methods of using data and evaluation findings beyond the APR
 - Service coverage: Review service participation rates, by school, and by student characteristics.
 - Gap analysis: Compare findings from paired survey items.
 - Dosage effects: Examine correlations of service hours and achievement tests.



Compass System



CHALLENGE: Collection, maintenance, and organization of demographic, academic, and service participation data.

SOLUTION: Expedites data entry via screens designed for speed & accuracy. CoBro technicians coordinate collection & upload of transcript data files.

CHALLENGE: Interpreting the data, and using it to inform program improvement.

SOLUTION: Over 40 customized reports designed to facilitate continuous program improvement.

CHALLENGE: Lack of expertise/resources to conduct impact analyses.

SOLUTION: Conducts statistical analyses and displays results in graphs & tables.

Benefits



- ✓ Benefits of utilizing data and evaluation findings beyond the APR
 - ✓ Program strengths and opportunities for improvement are identified.
 - ✓ Program stakeholders see that programmatic decisions are data-driven.
 - ✓ Objective evidence of program impact useful for GEAR UP advocacy.

Discussion



How have you used data and evaluation findings for continuous program improvement?

What are your optimal strategies?

Action Planning



How can you apply information gathered from this session to maximize data utility and strengthen program evaluation capacity when you return?

Action Planning



An action plan provides a description of an organization's approach to change.

✓ Guidance:

- Use a 3-month or 6-month time frame.
- Create a Purpose statement that clearly and succinctly.
- Identify key Action Steps that are the essential tasks.
- Assign someone who will be Responsible for each action step.
- Document the Process measure or milestones that will be achieved upon completion of each step.
- Identify the Outcome(s) that will occur as a result.. Outcomes should describe the changes in knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors.

Collective Knowledge



Tap into the collective knowledge of the GEAR UP community.

Questions?





THANK YOU!

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