

Getting Organized:

How to Build a Comprehensive Assessment Plan

Institute on Authentic Assessment |
June 10, 2026

AAC&U

VISION	OUTCOMES	OUTPUTS	ACTIVITIES	INPUTS
What is the hope for this work? What mindset is needed to bring this vision into existence?	How will you measure success for students? For faculty? For divisions (e.g. student affairs, assessment, advising)?	What evidence is needed to make the case? What evidence is needed to communicate need?	How will students be engaged to reach intended outcomes? How will faculty/staff be engaged?	What resources are needed to advance objectives for students, faculty, staff?

Assessment

Source: Adapted from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide



Vision

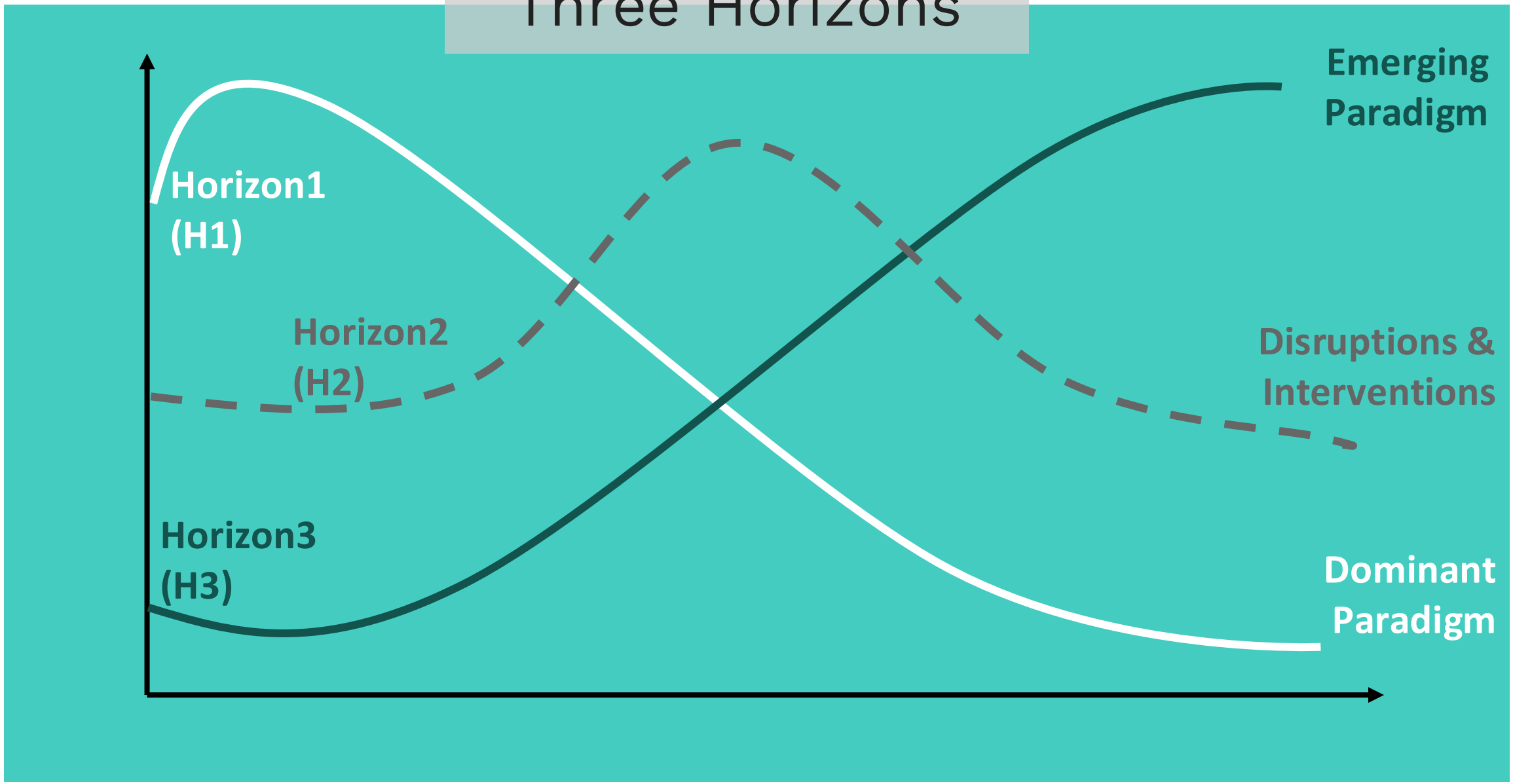
What *mindset* is needed for assessment?

What beliefs/values/assumptions illustrate the current mindset about assessment?

What beliefs/values/assumptions would illustrate a mindset for a future vision?

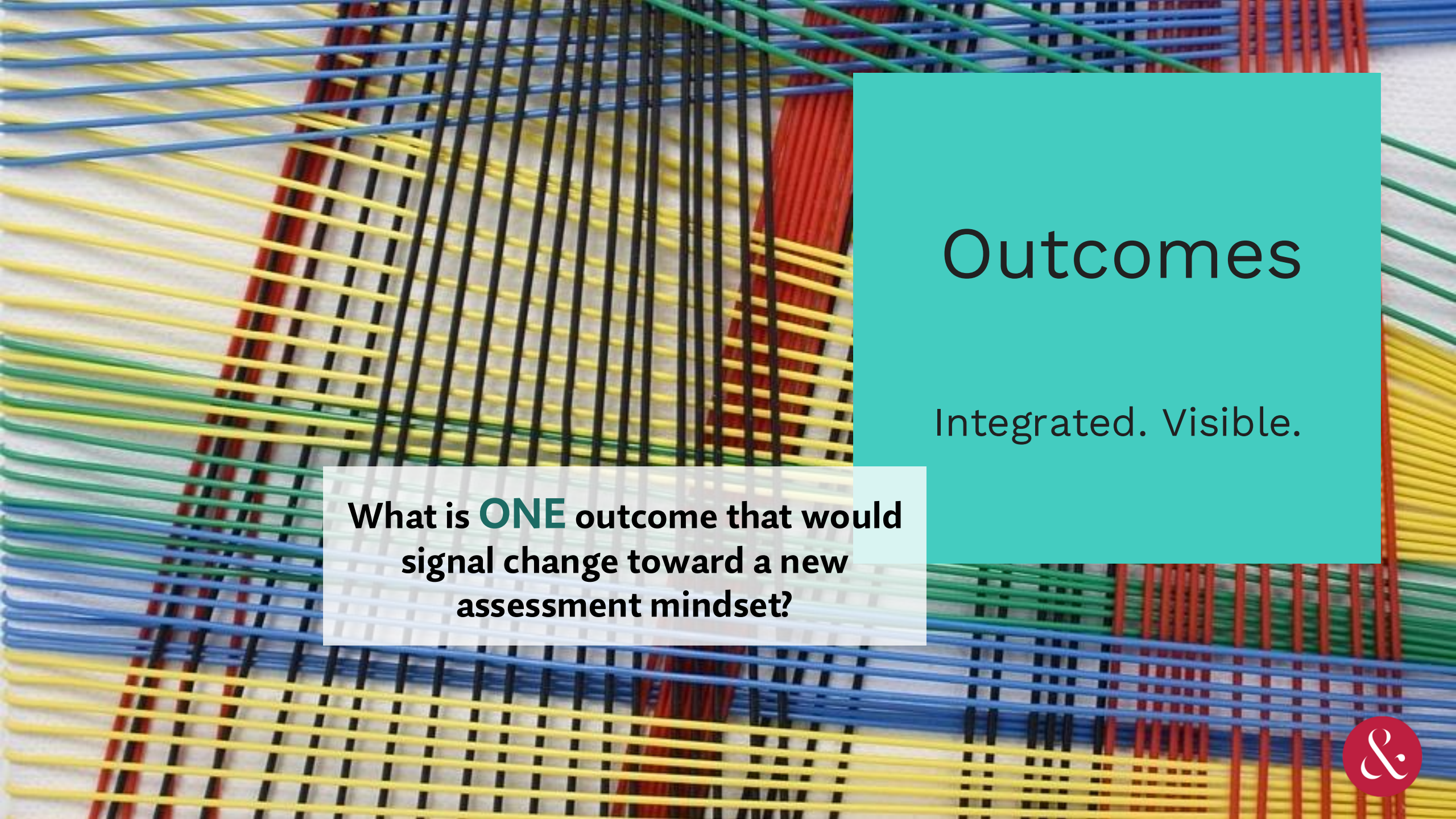


Three Horizons



Source: Bill Sharpe, 2020 (2nd Ed), Three Horizons: The Patterning of Hope

SOLVABLE



Outcomes

Integrated. Visible.

What is ONE outcome that would signal change toward a new assessment mindset?

SHORT-TERM

- Identify shared learning outcomes across depts and aligned with institutional mission
- Identify equity gaps across signature HIPs
- Expand awareness (e.g., visuals, website)
- Clarify assessment protocols

INTERMEDIATE

- Mapping of outcomes, HIPs, signature assignments
- Articulate faculty outcomes
- Reduce equity gaps
- Assess student learning gains, areas for improvement

LONG-TERM

- Target elements of culture change
- Campus-wide Awareness/ recognition
- Collaboration across siloes
- Alignment/ allocation of resources
- Tracking of equity gaps & learning gains

VISION

A new vision of assessment will inform our understanding of student learning and success by...

OUTCOMES

- Long-term
- Intermediate
- Short-term

OUTPUTS

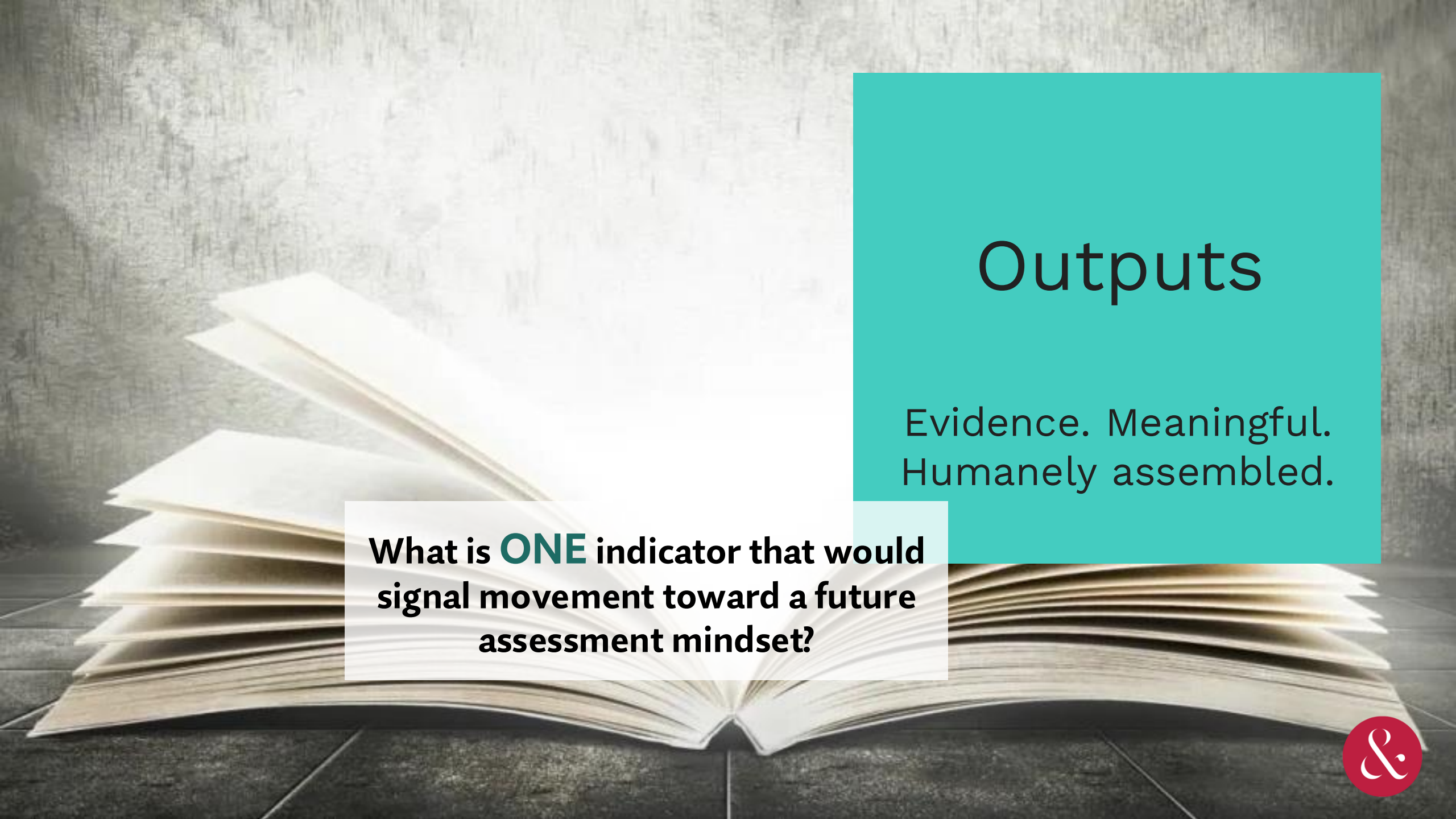
What counts as good evidence?

ACTIVITIES

What will students be asked to do?

INPUTS

What is needed for the process?



Outputs

Evidence. Meaningful. Humanely assembled.

What is ONE indicator that would signal movement toward a future assessment mindset?

Students

Qualitative
- Focus groups
- Open-ended comments
- Reflections

Quantitative
- Retention/Graduation
- Climate Surveys
- Course Evals
- Aggregate rubric data

Indirect
- National Surveys
- Local surveys
- Course evals
- Focus groups

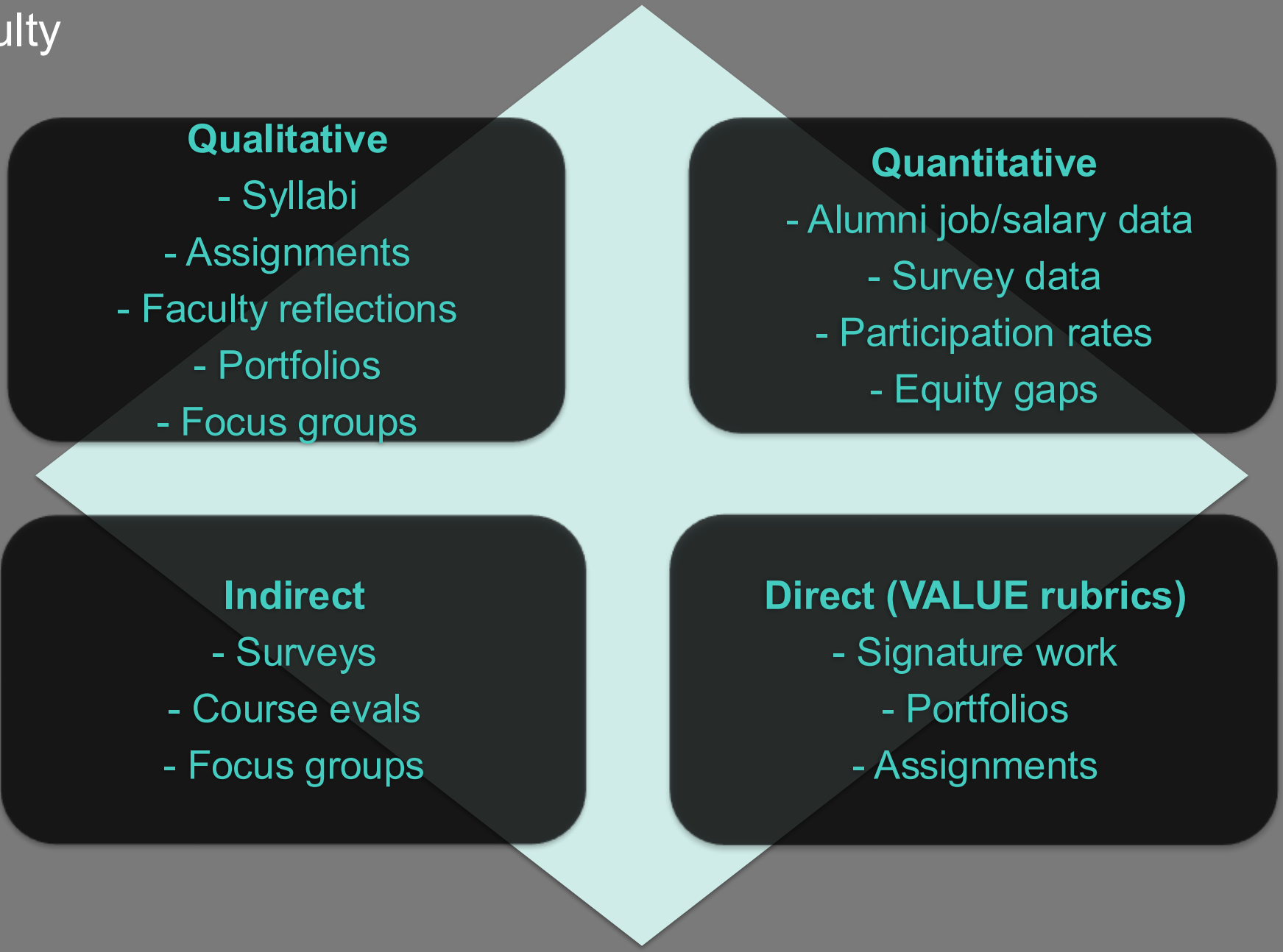
Direct (VALUE rubrics)
- Signature work
- Portfolios
- Assignments

What's the best way to tell this story?

What can you say about equity?

How much data is needed?

Faculty


Qualitative
- Syllabi
- Assignments
- Faculty reflections
- Portfolios
- Focus groups
Quantitative
- Alumni job/salary data
- Survey data
- Participation rates
- Equity gaps
Indirect
- Surveys
- Course evals
- Focus groups
Direct (VALUE rubrics)
- Signature work
- Portfolios
- Assignments



Activities

Outcomes driven. Output oriented. High quality.

What is ONE SIGNATURE experience or activity that would be needed to build a new assessment mindset?

VISION

A new vision of assessment will inform our understanding of student learning and success by...

OUTCOMES

- Long-term
- Intermediate
- Short-term

OUTPUTS

- Syllabi
- Assignments
- ePortfolios
- Alumni data
- Course evaluations
- Advising guide
- Graphics
- Data (qualitative and quantitative)

ACTIVITIES

- Professional learning
- Cross-divisional development of assignments
- Training workshops for advising, faculty fellows
- Employer advisory groups

INPUTS

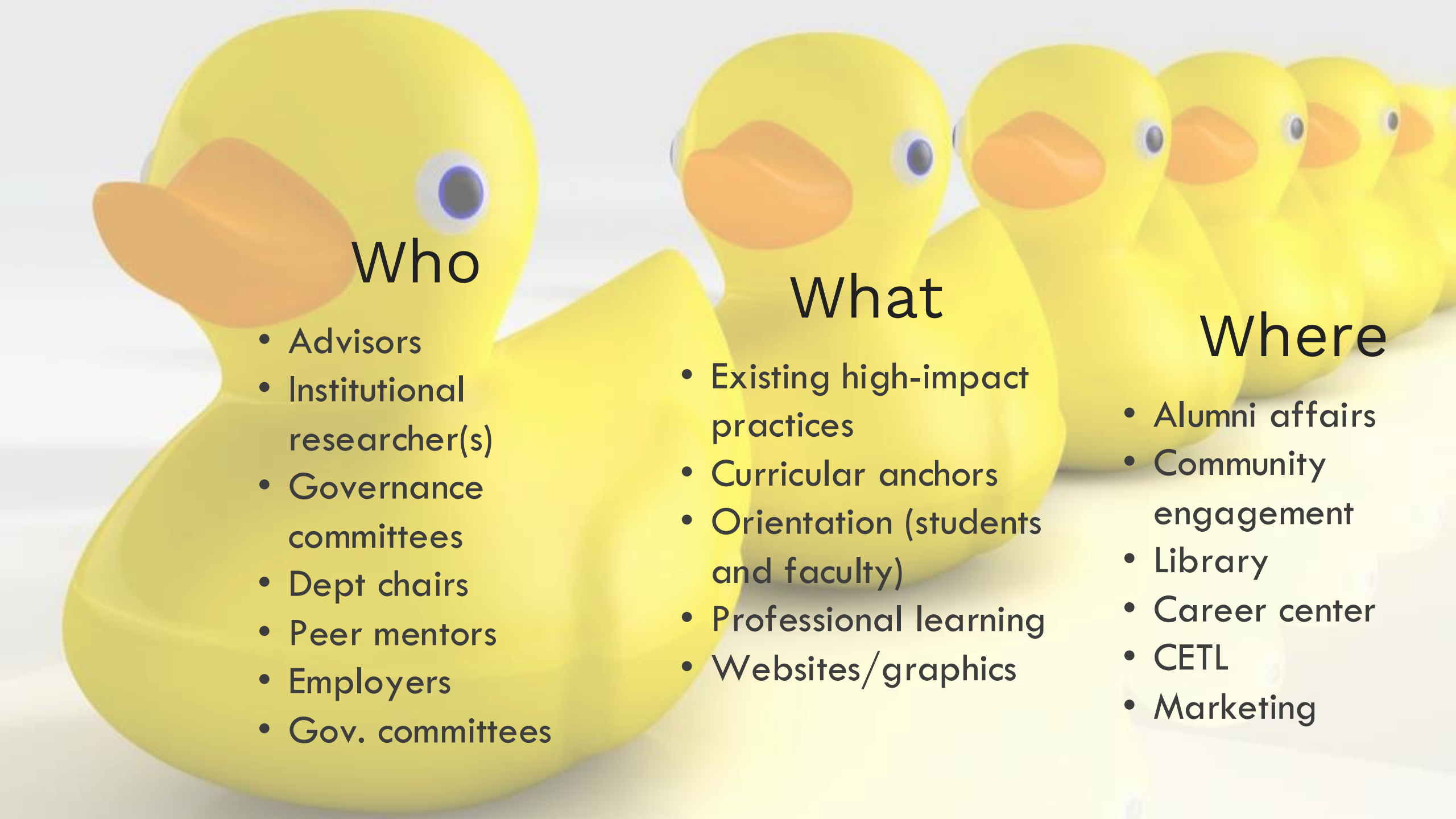
What resources are needed?



What is ONE resource needed to promote/encourage a new assessment mindset?

Resources

Inclusive. Expansive.



Who

- Advisors
- Institutional researcher(s)
- Governance committees
- Dept chairs
- Peer mentors
- Employers
- Gov. committees

What

- Existing high-impact practices
- Curricular anchors
- Orientation (students and faculty)
- Professional learning
- Websites/graphics

Where

- Alumni affairs
- Community engagement
- Library
- Career center
- CETL
- Marketing

VISION

What is the mindset that will guide assessment to advance understanding of student learning, engagement, and institutional thriving?

OUTCOMES

What would signal movement *toward* that vision and a *decline* of the current mindset?

- Long-term
- Intermediate
- Short-term

OUTPUTS

What counts as good evidence?

- Direct
- Indirect
- Qualitative
- Quantitative

ACTIVITIES

What will students, faculty, staff be asked to do? Why?

- Define labels
- Assess quality
- Map current activity

INPUTS

What resources are needed for the process?

- Existing & needed
- Curricular
- Co-Curricular
- Divisional

Equity Assumptions



finley@aacu.org