

Survey Says: Strategies for Responding to **Challenging** Findings



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**What happens when your data tells you
something you don't want to learn?**



THE VALUE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

A Comprehensive Research Review and Report

ACADEMIC LIBRARY IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING AND SUCCESS

Findings from Assessment in Action Team Projects



Prepared by Dr. Megan Oakleaf
for the Association of College and Research Libraries



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Academic Library Impact:

Improving Practice and Essential Areas to Research

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National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
November 2017

Creating Sustainable Assessment through Collaboration: National Program Reveals Effective Practices

Kara J. Malenfant and Karen Brown
Foreword by Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe



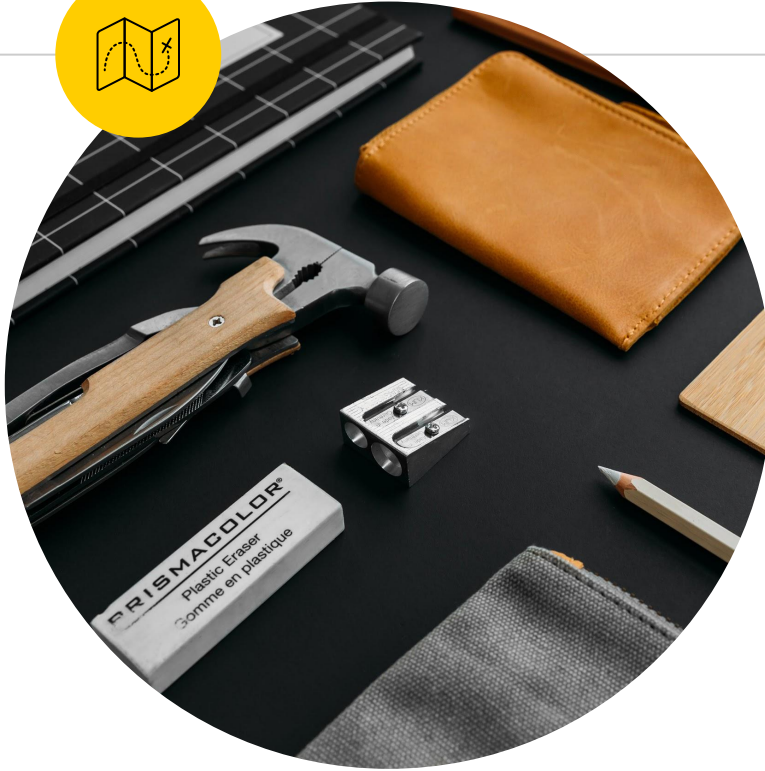
Occasional Paper #31
www.learningoutcomesassessment.org



Action research practices aim to open communicative spaces where people can come together in open dialogue to address issues of concern, and to engage in cycles of action and reflection, so that ideas that are tentatively articulated in reflection phases can be checked out systematically in phases of active experimentation.

“

Reason, P. (2007). Action research. In M. Bevir (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of governance* (Vol. 1, pp. 8–8). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781412952613.n2



Transforming a survey instrument to assess **value and impact**

- Collaboration with Office of Institutional Research & Evaluation
- Library supplied course-integrated information literacy workshop data

**Library instruction
data
+
Course registration
data**

**Added to
student
demographic
profiles**



Goal: connect library instruction to impact and engagement





Some of our 2016 findings:

95%

of students reported that the library contributed to their ability to find sources for course assignments

87%

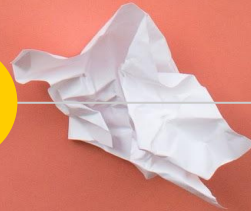
of students reported that the library contributed to their ability to work on projects for student clubs and organizations

98%

of students felt comfortable asking a librarian or other staff member for help



**No evidence of increased impact or engagement for students
who had *library instruction*.**



2016 Tisch Library Survey

Comments

Filters		
Question:	Respondent Type:	School:
3. How could Tisch Library improve its hours?	(All)	(All)
Code		
Stay open later in general (entire library)	67	1am is way too early for a university library to close!
Stay open later on weekends	51	
Open earlier on weekend mornings	47	10 am is too late to open on the weekend. I wake up early and library doesn't open until 10. I know that I am not the only student who has a hard time waking up.
Consider operating 24/7	43	10am on the weekend is such a pain. I would prefer 8am on the weekend that are still up around 8 on the weekend. I know that I am not the only student who has a hard time waking up.
Open earlier in general	37	as almost nothing else is open during the week.
Extended hours on Friday	23	24 Hour access outside of Final Exam Week
Stay open later around midterm and finals period	14	24 hour days - especially around late night studying especially during exam week
Longer hours in general	11	
Stay open later on weekdays	7	24 hour library during finals exam study
Stay open later (part of the library)	4	
More hours during holidays	3	
Reading room should be 24/7	3	24 Hour service would be actualy helpful

Filters				Survey Section:		In-Class Library Workshop (students)?	
Select a Sheet:				10 - Future services		(All)	
UG/GR/FAC							
Survey Section	Question Stem	Question Item	Value Label	Graduate Students		Faculty	
				N	%	N	%
10 - Future services	I would use a service that:	Helps make research projects I publish on the web more discoverable (by adding tagging and metadata)	Strongly agree	69	47.9%	39	37.9%
			Agree	63	43.8%	47	45.6%
			Disagree	10	6.9%	12	11.7%
			Strongly disagree	2	1.4%	5	4.9%
		Helps me comply with federal funding requirements	Strongly agree	32	29.9%	30	31.9%
							53.2%
							9.6%
							5.3%

Select Viewing Options:

Survey Section:
Reference management

Survey Question:
Zotero

Select TOP Row:
Respondent Type

Select BOTTOM Row:
Broad Field

Additional Filters:

Filter by: Respondent Type
(All)

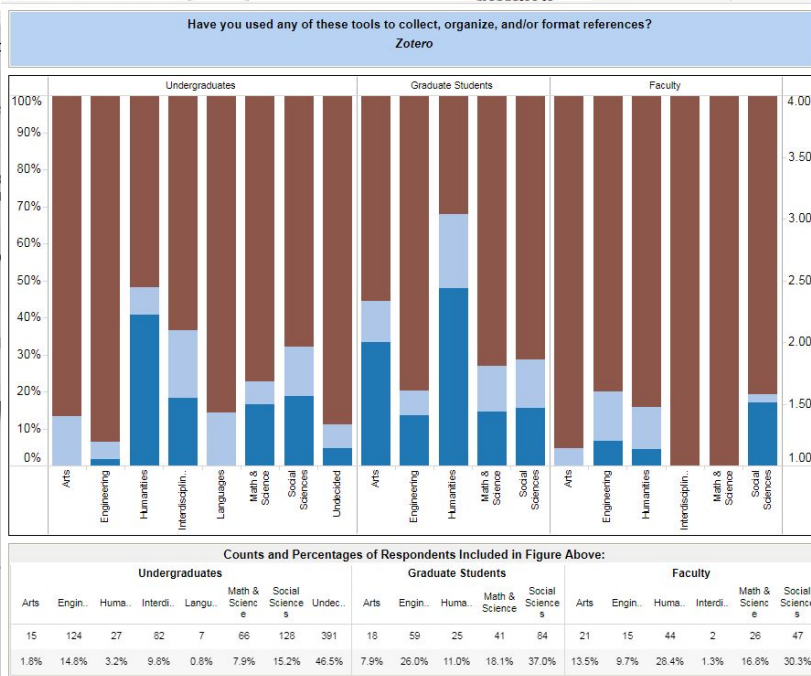
Filter by: School
(All)

Filter by: Broad Field
(All)

Filter by: Gender
(All)

Color Key:

- Have never used
- Used in the past
- Currently use



Who Uses Tisch?

Undergraduates

At Least Once a Semester



Weekly



School of Arts & Science



School of Engineering

Graduates

At Least Once a Semester



Weekly



Helpful Services and Collections



33%
asked a librarian
for help



40%
utilized
interlibrary loan
(average of grad and u.g.)

> 50% utilized:



Databases



**Print and
reserve books**

How Are They Using Tisch?

Studying



88%

Printing



77%

Group Projects



66%

Accessing eResources



79%

Studying



72%

Borrowing Materials



65%

Undergraduates



1/3 access an eResource
at least once a week

Graduates



2/3 access an eResource
at least once a week

Concerns



28% of students reported
insufficient access to electrical outlets.



32% of students reported
insufficient group study space.

What's The Impact?

96% agreed Tisch has all the resources needed to complete their work

All Students



87%
said Tisch helped
them with student
clubs & organizations
projects



95%
said Tisch increased
their ability to find
sources

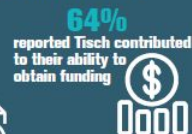
Faculty & Graduates



95% agreed Tisch helped
them stay current
in their fields



97%
boasted that Tisch helped them
become more productive researchers



64%
reported Tisch contributed
to their ability to
obtain funding

A Welcoming Environment



99% of respondents felt welcome,
safe, and respected in Tisch Library.



An average of **22%** feel that service
hours are inadequate.



Internal communication was **less than satisfying**

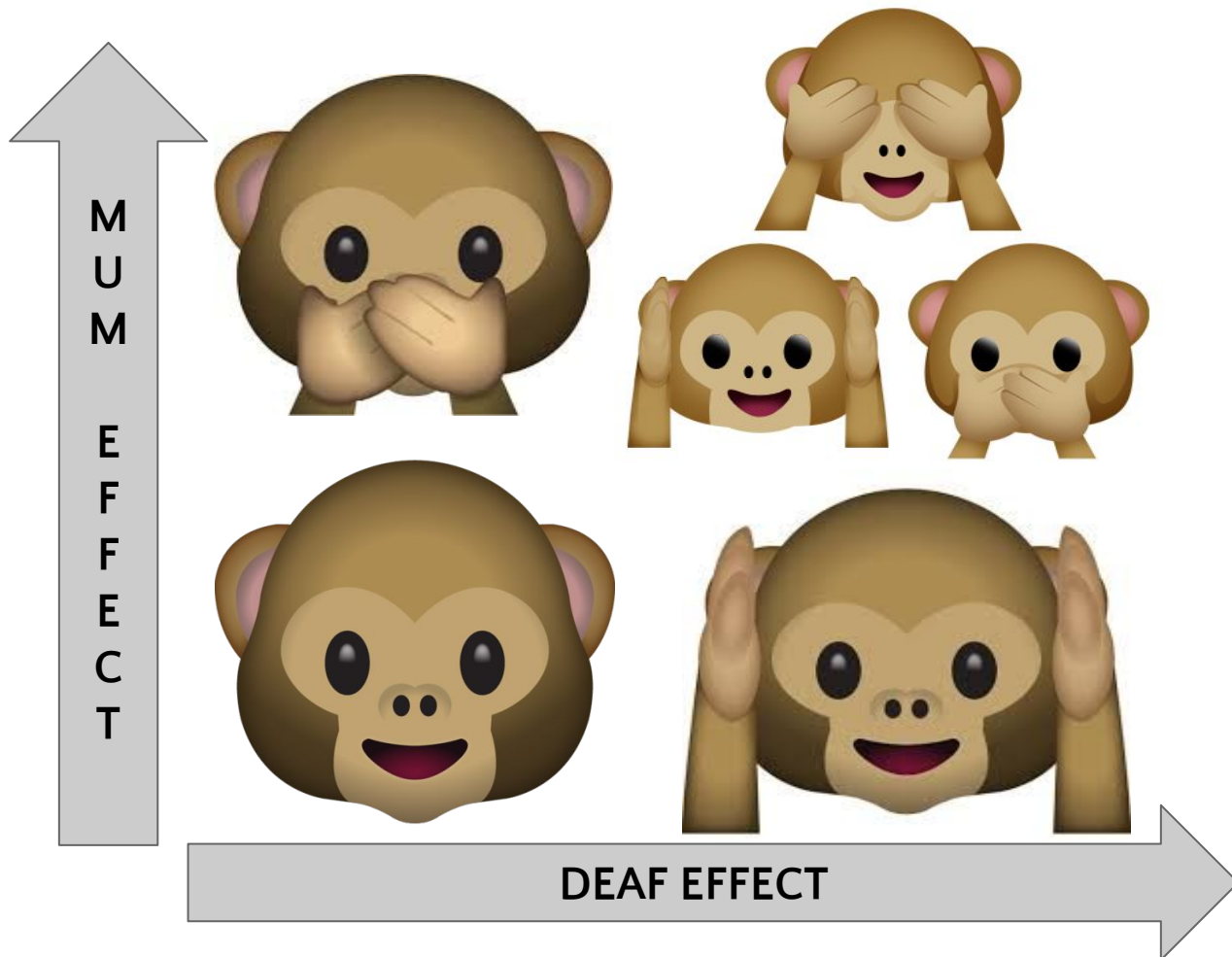
All-staff meeting and exercise

- What information from the survey was surprising to you? Puzzling or confusing? Affirming?
- How can information from the survey guide and align with your work? The work of the library? The institution?
- If the library were to dive deeper and devote additional study to one topic from the survey results, what topic would you recommend?
- What can you personally do to raise student and faculty awareness of collections and services?

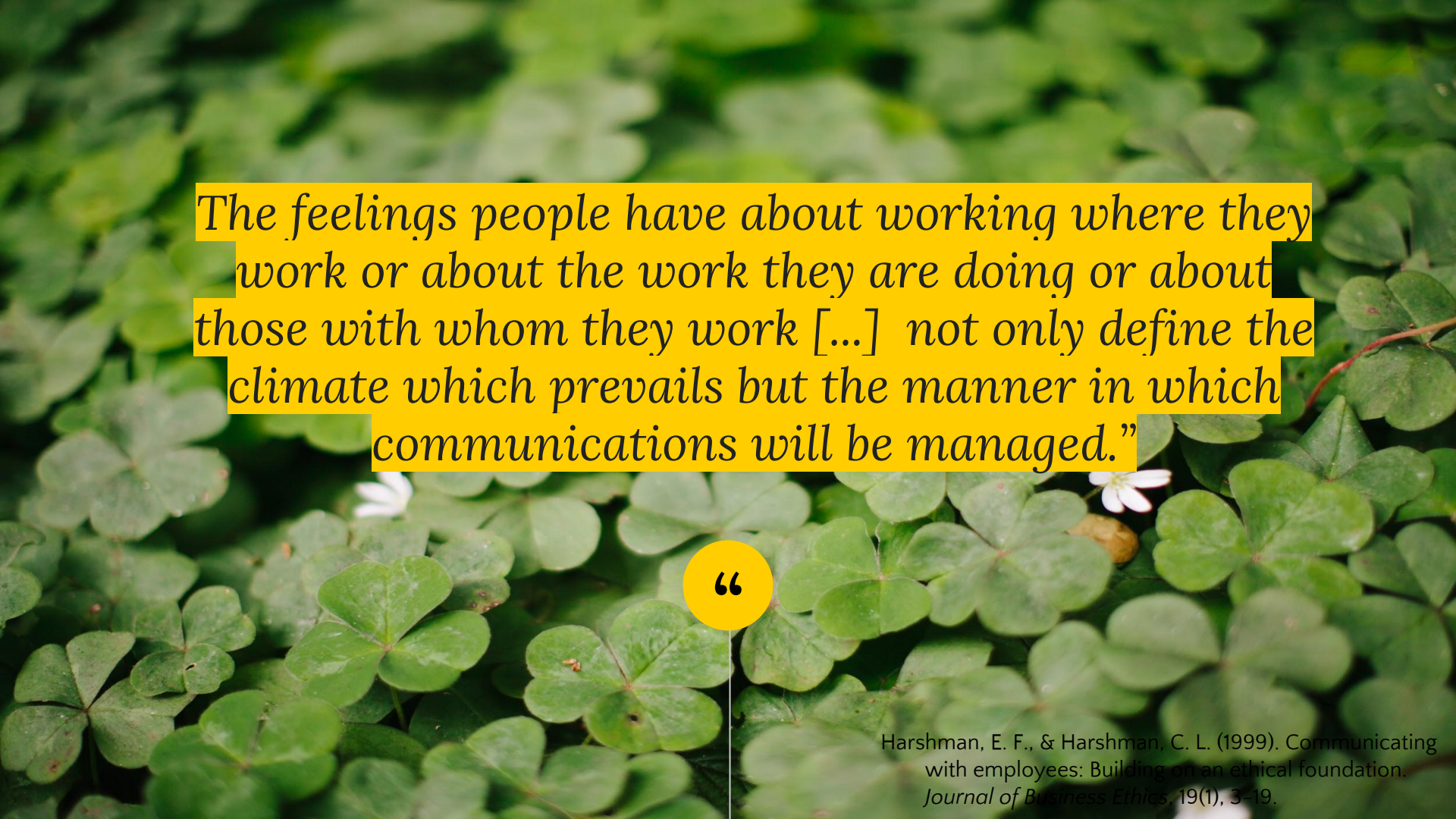


MUM Effect

A reluctance to transmit bad news.



Keil, M., & Robey, D. (2001). Blowing the whistle on troubled software projects. *Communications of the ACM*, 44(4), 87–93.



The feelings people have about working where they work or about the work they are doing or about those with whom they work [...] not only define the climate which prevails but the manner in which communications will be managed.”

“

Harshman, E. F., & Harshman, C. L. (1999). Communicating with employees: Building on an ethical foundation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 19(1), 3-19.



Delivery of bad news is a **multiphase** process

Preparation

- Advance warning
- Rehearsal
- Calibrating expectations

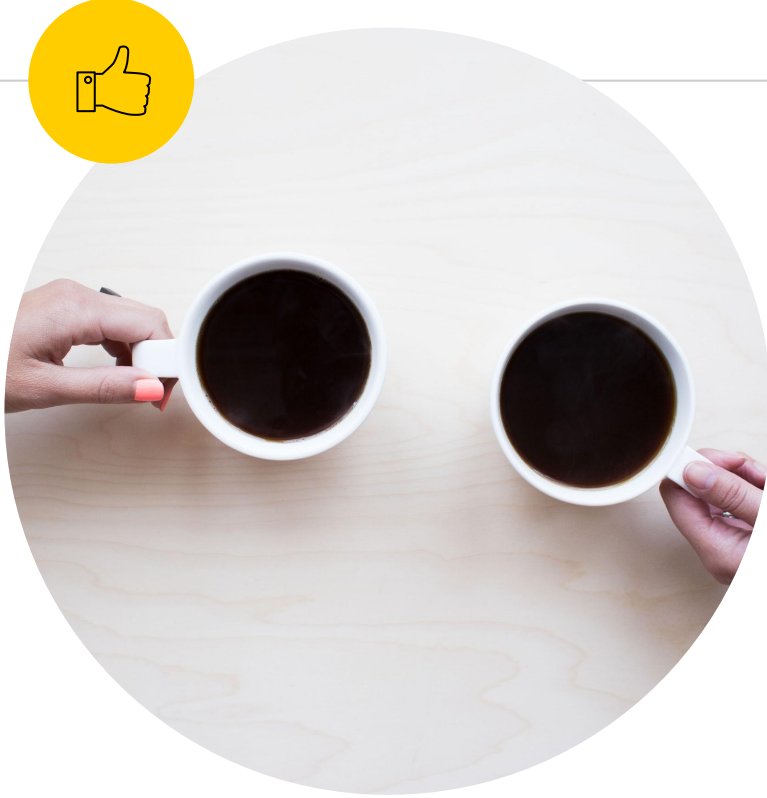
Delivery

- Timing of delivery
- Medium of delivery

Transition

- Public relations
- Caretaking

Bies, R. J. (2013). The delivery of bad news in organizations: A framework for analysis. *Journal of Management*, 136–162.



Have an anticipatory conversation before you get your results.

What would constitute good news? Champagne? A crisis? How would you respond to different scenarios?



#1 Let's practice!

Anticipatory conversations

Your library survey includes a section about climate. Respondents can answer strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

- ◉ Library staff members treat me with respect.
- ◉ Library patrons (e.g. students, community members) are respectful
- ◉ I feel safe in the Library.
- ◉ I feel welcome in the Library.

What would constitute good news? Bad news?
How might the library respond?

Handout: <https://tufts.box.com/v/surveysays>



An example response

% who agree or strongly agree	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Faculty	Staff
Tisch Library staff members treat me with respect	98%	100%	100%	98%
Tisch Library patrons (e.g. students, community members) are respectful	94%	96%	98%	99%
I feel safe in Tisch Library	99%	99%	99%	99%
I feel welcome in Tisch Library	98%	99%	99%	99%



Planning your **medium & message**

- ◉ Internal (to the library) or external (other campus units)
- ◉ Do they care about the big picture, the details, or something else?
- ◉ What is their data literacy level?
- ◉ How comfortable are they with library jargon?
- ◉ What are their communication preferences?
- ◉ What do they want to know?



Example constituent concerns



**Instruction
Librarian**

The results don't make sense to me. How can I learn more?

Is my job going to change for the worse?



Provost





What did you already do to solve this problem?

Will I need to respond to complaints?

#2 Let's practice!

Who are your internal & external constituents?
What are their concerns?



<p><i>What did you already do to solve this problem?</i></p> <p><i>Will I need to respond to complaints?</i></p>			
			
Provost			



Tips for preparing to share bad news

Do

- Understand why the decision was made before sharing the news
- Prepare and rehearse what you're going to say
- Explain the rationale and the process for making the decision

Don't

- Sugarcoat the news — be clear and direct
- Let your body language belie your words
- Allow people to debate the merits of the decision — focus on moving forward

Gallo, A. (2015, March 30). How to Deliver Bad News to Your Employees. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2015/03/how-to-deliver-bad-news-to-your-employee>

Organizations that focus on appreciating and cultivating positive organizational traits such as hope, resiliency, and optimism prior to a crisis may be more successful in garnering employee support during and after the crisis.

“

French, S. L., & Holden, T. Q. (2012). Positive Organizational Behavior: A Buffer for Bad News. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 75(2), 208–220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569912441823>



Communication practices in learning organizations

- Central to the organization and its performance
- Regular, not intermittent
- Activities and content are coordinated
- Courageous rather than timid and safe
- Collaborative
- Seen as credible by stakeholders

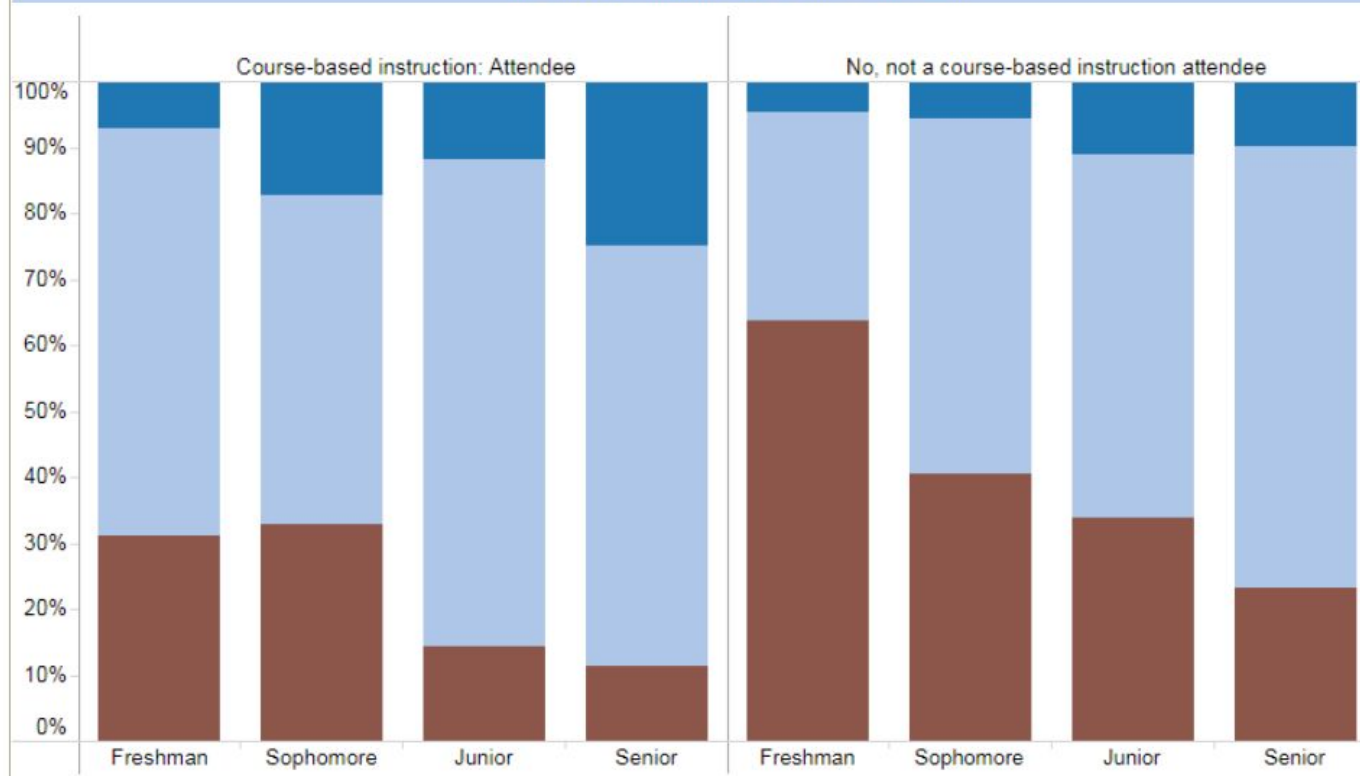
Harshman, E. F., & Harshman, C. L. (1999). Communicating with employees: Building on an ethical foundation. *Journal of Business Ethics*; Dordrecht, 19(1), 3–19.



Our next steps

- Staggered release of results
- Planning data literacy workshops/training for staff
 - How to read a table of data (differences between N, %)
 - How to create effective visualizations of survey data
 - Comparing the 2016 and 2018 data for evidence of meaningful change
 - How to critically evaluate data stories
- Continuing to investigate the impact of library instruction

Since September, I have:
Made an appointment with a subject librarian



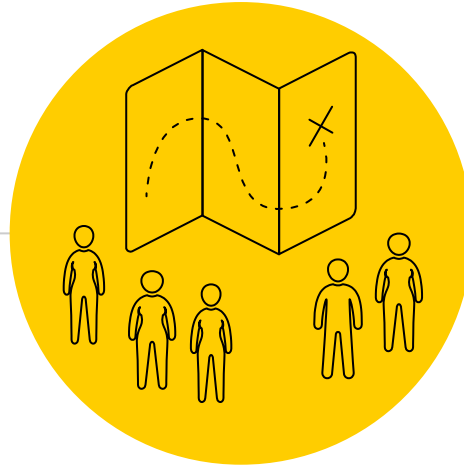
Students had library instruction

No library instruction

- Students made an appointment with a subject librarian
- Student was aware of this service but did not use it
- Student did not know about this service

**We remain encouraged to
*ask challenging questions***





Your next steps?

What new ideas and concepts will I put into immediate practice?
What other ideas will I need to consider further, but still have potential for use?
Are there colleagues and others on my campus who came to mind?



Recommended reading part 1

- Bies, R. J. (2013). The delivery of bad news in organizations: A framework for analysis. *Journal of Management*, 136–162.
- Bisel, R. S., Messersmith, A. S., & Kelley, K. M. (2012). Supervisor–Subordinate Communication: Hierarchical Mum Effect Meets Organizational Learning. *The Journal of Business Communication* (1973), 49(2), 128–147.
- French, S. L., & Holden, T. Q. (2012). Positive Organizational Behavior: A Buffer for Bad News. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 75(2), 208–220.
- Gallo, A. (2015, March 30). How to Deliver Bad News to Your Employees. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2015/03/how-to-deliver-bad-news-to-your-employees>
- Harshman, E. F., & Harshman, C. L. (1999). Communicating with employees: Building on an ethical foundation. *Journal of Business Ethics: JBE; Dordrecht*, 19(1), 3–19.
- Jones, A., & Kelly, D. (2014). Deafening silence? Time to reconsider whether organisations are silent or deaf when things go wrong. *BMJ Qual Saf*, 23(9), 709–713.



Recommended reading part 2

- Keil, M., & Robey, D. (2001). Blowing the whistle on troubled software projects. *Communications of the ACM*, 44(4), 87–93.
- Kippist, L., & Duarte, F. (2015). What does it mean having difficult conversations in the workplace?: An exploratory literature review. *Employment Relations Record*, 15(2), 61.
- Lee, F. (1993). Being Polite and Keeping MUM: How Bad News is Communicated in Organizational Hierarchies. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 23(14), 1124–1149.
- Marler, L. E., McKee, D., Cox, S., Simmering, M., & Allen, D. (2012). Don't Make Me the Bad Guy: Organizational Norms, Self-monitoring, and the Mum Effect. *Journal of Managerial Issues: JMI; Pittsburg*, 24(1), 97–116,8.
- Oakleaf, M. J. (2017). *Academic Library Value: The Impact Starter Kit*. American Library Association.
- Park, C., Im, G., & Keil, M. (2008). Overcoming the Mum Effect in IT Project Reporting: Impacts of Fault Responsibility and Time Urgency. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems; Atlanta*, 9(7), 409–431.



Thanks!

Any **questions?**

You can find us at

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 @meaneyd

Slides & handout:

<https://tufts.box.com/v/surveysays>

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by [SlidesCarnival](#)
- Photographs by [Death to the Stock Photo](#)