

An Improvement Approach

How can we use student evaluations
to improve teaching?

Lee Adam
Clinton Golding

Otago : Univeristy



Why evaluate?

- Quality advancement
- Quality assurance
- Summative judgements
- Improvement

The black box of improvement



Aim

To identify some of the strategies that excellent teachers adopt when using evaluations to improve their teaching

18 participants

- 15 award-winning teachers
- 1 'pilot' teacher
- 2 participant researchers
- 7 focus groups

An improvement approach

Golding, C., & Adam, L. (2016). Evaluate to improve: Useful approaches to student evaluation. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(1), 1-14. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2014.976810

Processes

1. Multiple sources of data
2. Identifying what you want to find out about
3. Interpreting the data
4. Deciding what to change

1. Multiple data sources

- Formal course/teacher evaluations
- Peer observations
- Fast feedback in class
- Class representative meetings
- Student one-to-one
- Student assessments
- Self reflection

2. What to ask?

- Specific to what you want to know
- The same questions every year
- The unexpected or important
- What you've done differently
- Open-ended questions

3. Interpreting the data

- Look for patterns
- Look for passion
- Read between the lines
- Look for the big picture
- Reinforcement

4. Deciding what to change

- Is it recurrent or common?
- Is it relevant?
- Is it reasonable?
- Is it do-able?

Strategies

- Expectations management
- Immediate changes
- Creative improvements

Expectations management

- Use evaluations to find mismatches between teacher's expectations and students' expectations

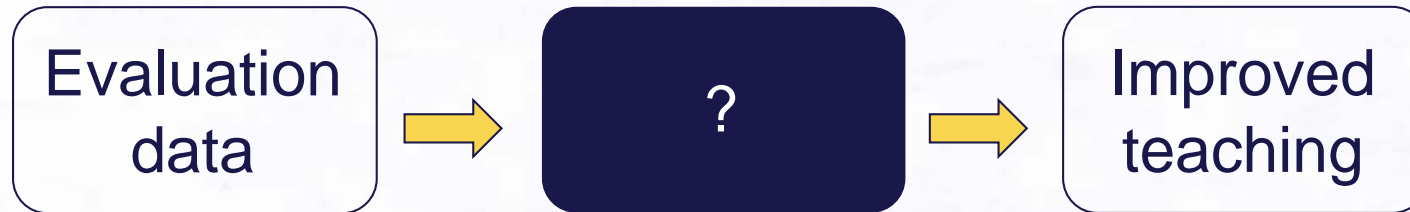
Immediate changes

- In-class changes
- Review teaching plans
- Flexible and opportunistic

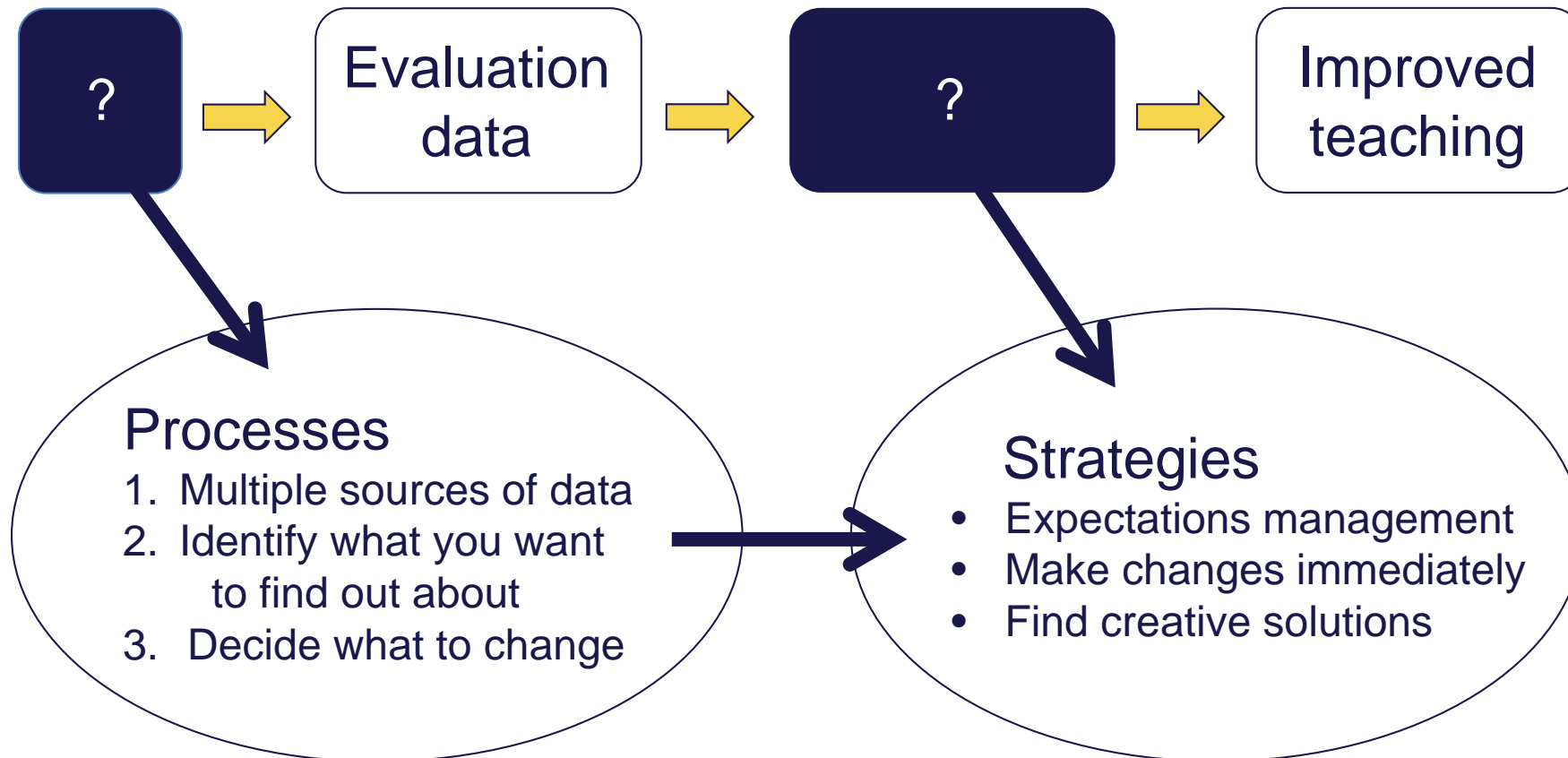
Creative improvements

- Experiment and trial
- Community of practice
- Place a high value on teaching

Evaluate to improve



Evaluate to improve



An improvement approach

Informal research



<https://www.dreamstime.com/illustration/battery-torch.html>

References

- Golding, C., & Adam, L. (2016). Evaluate to improve: Useful approaches to student evaluation. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(1), 1-14. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2014.976810
- Thomas, D. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.
- University of Otago (2011). *Guidelines for Teaching at Otago*. Available at: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/staff/otago027122.pdf>

Questions? Comments? Discussion

Otago : Unibersity

