

Assessment and Evaluation

Definition of Assessment

Assessment is defined as a methodical way of acquiring, reviewing and using information about someone or something, so as to make improvement where necessary. The term is interpreted in a variety of ways, i.e. educational, psychological, financial, taxation, human resource and so on.

In general, assessment is an ongoing interactive process, in which two parties (assessor and assessee) are involved. The assessor is someone who assesses the performance based on the defined standards, while assessee is someone who is being assessed. The process aims at determining the effectiveness of the overall performance of the assessee and the areas of improvement. The process involves, setting up goals, collecting information (qualitative and quantitative) and using the information for increasing quality.

Definition of Evaluation

The term 'evaluation' is derived from the word 'value' which refers to 'usefulness of something'. Therefore, evaluation is an examination of something to measure its utility.

Simply put, evaluation is a systematic and objective process of measuring or observing someone or something, with an aim of drawing conclusions, using criteria, usually governed by set standards or by making a comparison. It gauges the performance of a person, completed project, process or product, to determine its worth or significance.

The evaluation includes both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data and undertaken once in a while. It ascertains whether the standards or goals established are met or not. If they are met successfully, then it identifies the difference between actual and intended outcomes.

Differences Between Assessment and Evaluation

The significant differences between assessment and evaluation are discussed in the points given below:

1. The process of collecting, reviewing and using data, for the purpose of improvement in the current performance, is called assessment. A process of passing judgment, on the basis of defined criteria and evidence is called evaluation.
2. Assessment is diagnostic in nature as it tends to identify areas of improvement. On the other hand, evaluation is judgemental, because it aims at providing an overall grade.
3. The assessment provides feedback on performance and ways to enhance performance in future. As against this, evaluation ascertains whether the standards are met or not.
4. The purpose of assessment is formative, i.e. to increase quality whereas evaluation is all about judging quality, therefore the purpose is summative.
5. Assessment is concerned with process, while evaluation focuses on product.
6. In an assessment, the feedback is based on observation and positive & negative points. In contrast to evaluation, in which the feedback relies on the level of quality as per set standard.

7. In an assessment, the relationship between assessor and assessee is reflective, i.e. the criteria are defined internally. On the contrary, the evaluator and evaluatee share a prescriptive relationship, wherein the standards are imposed externally.
8. The criteria for assessment are set by both the parties jointly. As opposed to evaluation, wherein the criteria are set by the evaluator.
9. The measurement standards for assessment are absolute, which seeks to achieve the quintessential outcome. As against this, standards of measurement for evaluation are comparative, that makes a distinction between better and worse.

Conclusion

So, after reviewing the points above, it would be clear that assessment and evaluation are completely different. While evaluation involves making judgments, assessment is concerned with correcting the deficiencies in one's performance. Although, they play a crucial role in analysing and refining the performance of a person, product, project or process.