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A Three-Pronged Model for Assessment Planning in Higher Education

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A Need for Innovativeness

- "A number of factors are examined to account for the persistence of traditional methods of assessment and the absence of widespread innovation. …Even in subject areas which lack a long tradition, innovation does not predominate…"

  (Assessment Matters in Higher Education: Choosing and Using Diverse Approaches, edited by Sally Brown & Angela Glasner, 1999)

A Need for An Innovative Approach

- **Higher Education is rapidly changing**
  - Increased changes in mode of Delivery
    - Increased opportunities for distance delivery methods
    - Increased fragmentation of long course programs through the semester system and use of modules
  - Accountability extend beyond the institution
    - Increased focus on Continuous Quality Improvement

Planned Approach to Innovation

- Thoughtful strategy in implementation of change in current assessment process
- If assessment is truly one of the most powerful levers faculty has to influence the way students learn
  - Change should be strategic in nature
  - Change should be intentional not accidental
  - The impact of the change should be considered carefully

Identifying Goals and Learning Outcomes to Measure

- Would it be a good idea to know what the stakeholders (students, employers, faculty, accrediting agencies, parents, etc.) expects?
- Would it be valuable to prioritize learning outcomes?
- Would it be valuable to tie a particular learning outcome to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
- Would it be helpful to know where to focus as you consider available assessment resources?
- Would it be valuable to identify the performance indicators within your assessment plan?

A Three-Pronged Model for Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**
  - To establish sound strategies and goals based on the internal and external environments
- **Quality Function Deployment (QFD)**
  - To specify customer requirements; prioritize them and try and get the most out of the “limited” resources
- **The Balanced Scorecard (BSC)**
  - To develop performance indicators given the strategies and objectives resulting from the SWOT and QFD analyses

SWOT Analysis

- Identify and evaluate internally and externally the following:
  - Economic, social, political and technological aspects
    - Internal
      - Strengths
      - Weaknesses
    - External
      - Opportunities
      - Threats

SWOT Analysis – Example
(Accounting, B.A.)

SWOT Analysis

Environment			
	Internal	**Strengths**	**Weaknesses**
		◆ High pass rate (CPA) ◆ High quality students	Lack of practical experience
	External	**Opportunities**	**Threats**
		High industry presence in the local area	Depressed local economy

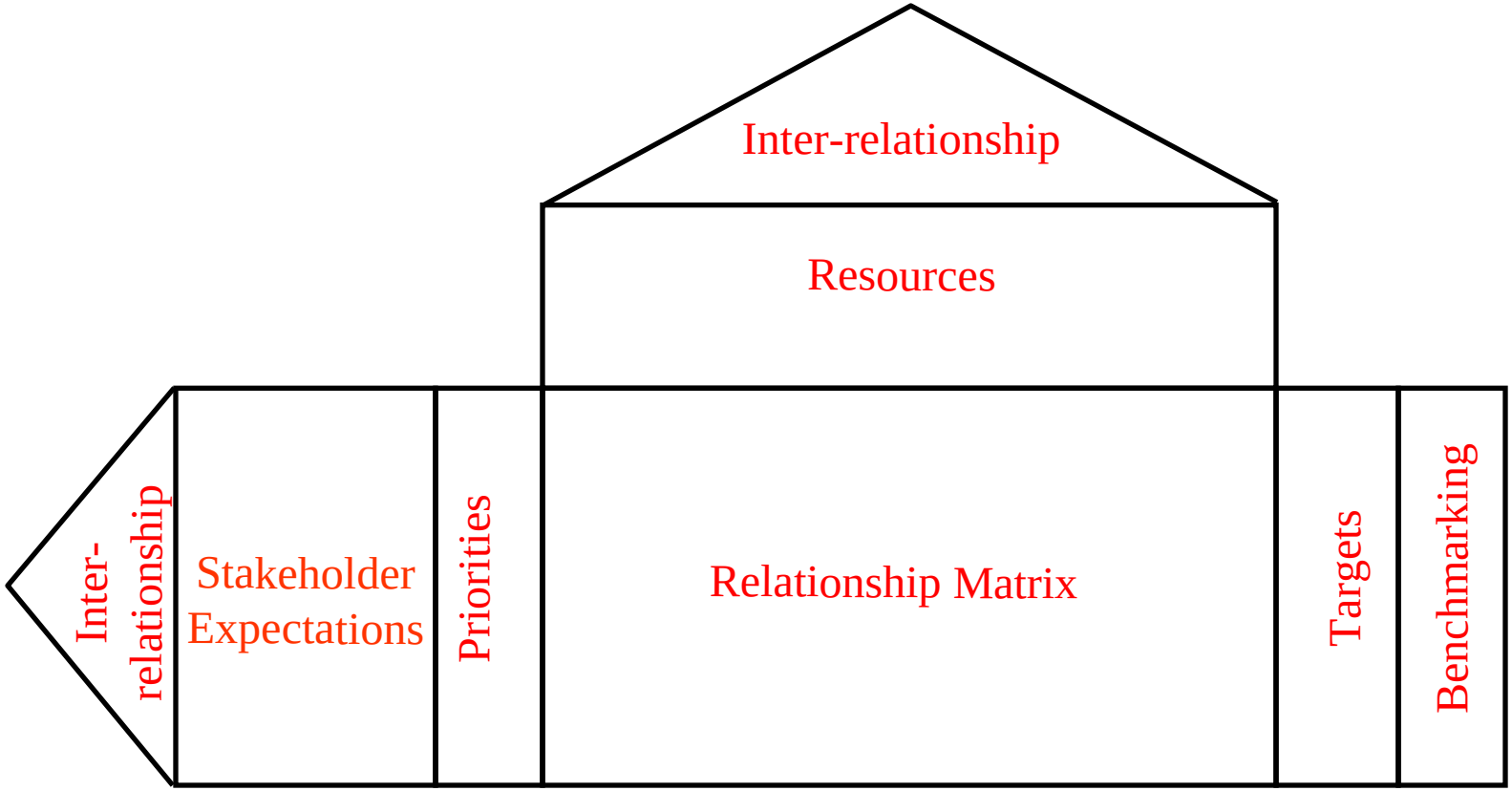
Benefits of the SWOT Analysis to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- Enhances analysis of internal and external environment
- Assists in assessing the relevance of program's mission statement
- Enhances the ability to develop meaningful goals, student learning outcomes and measurement approaches

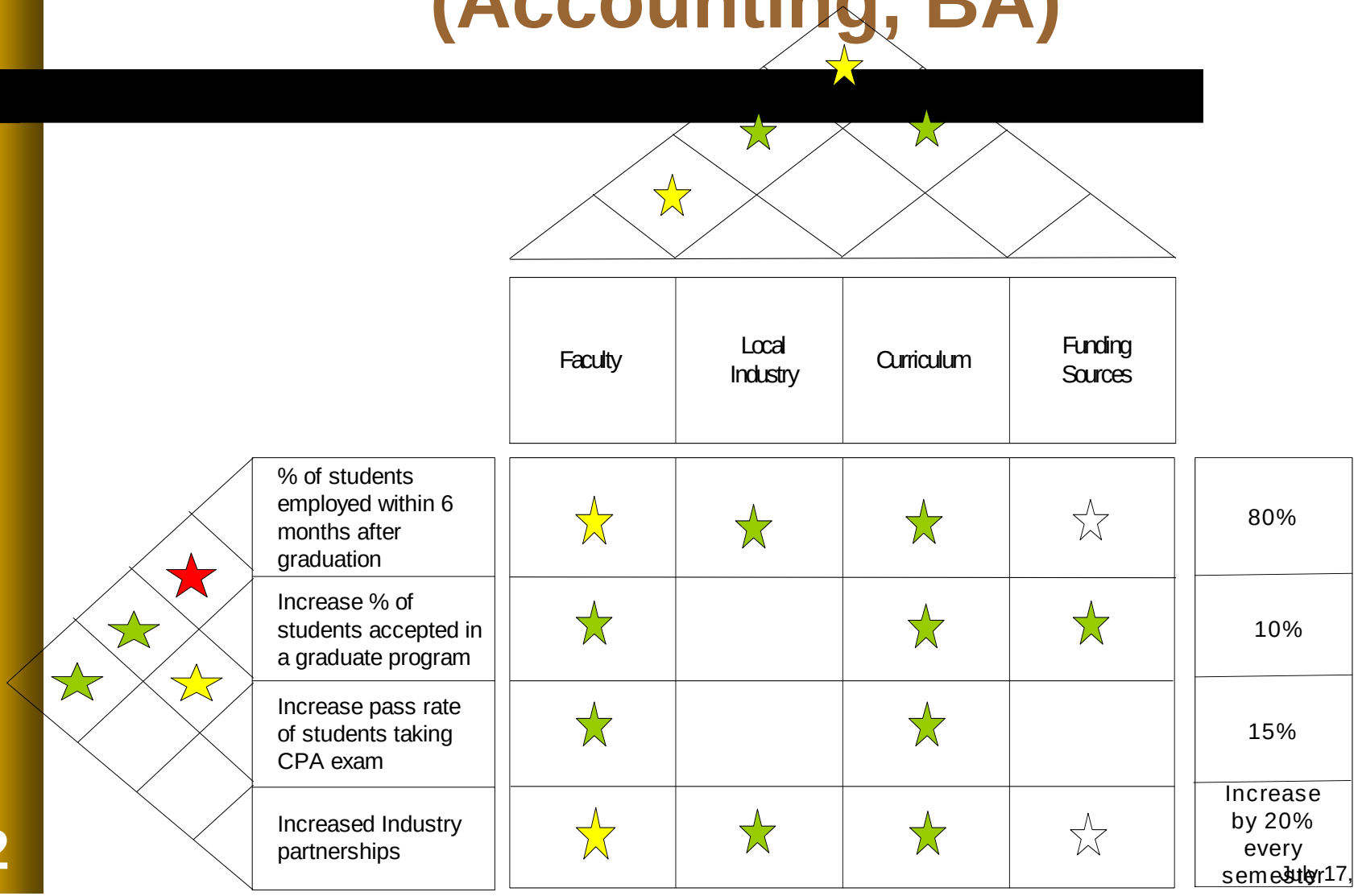
Quality Function Deployment (QFD): Structural Framework

- Anticipates, identifies, prioritizes and focuses on key stakeholders' expectations, which leads to higher customer satisfaction and an increased competitive advantage
- Considers present needs and future expectations of all stakeholders, which answers the question “What”
- Hones strengths and opportunities of the organization, which addresses the question of “How”
- Identifies system bottlenecks and enhances future implementation of proposed changes

QFD - House of Quality



House of Quality – Example in (Accounting, BA)



	Faculty	Local Industry	Curriculum	Funding Sources	
% of students employed within 6 months after graduation	★	★	★	☆	80%
Increase % of students accepted in a graduate program	★		★	★	10%
Increase pass rate of students taking CPA exam	★		★		15%
Increased Industry partnerships	★	★	★	☆	Increase by 20% every semester

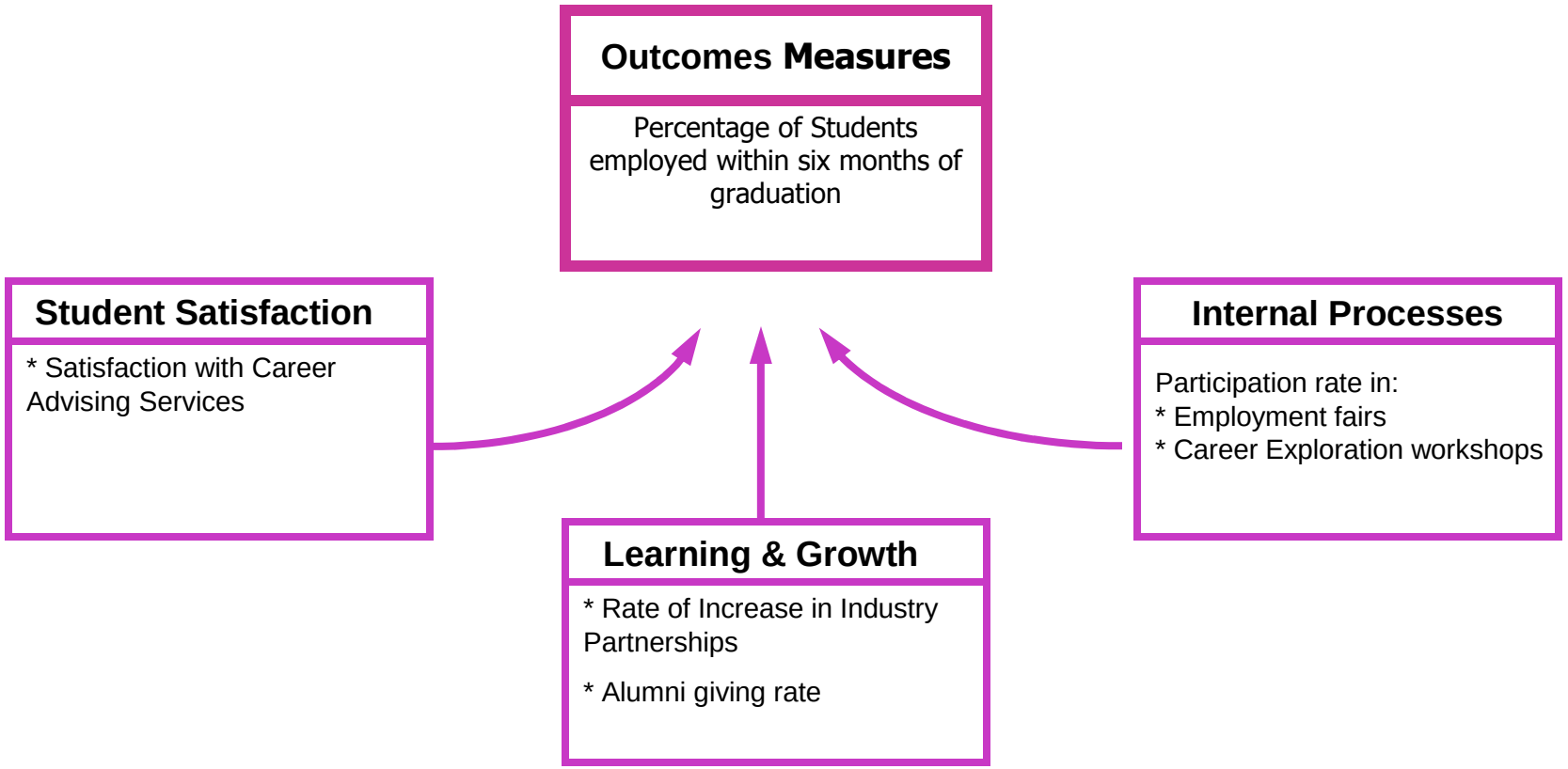
Benefits of QFD to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- The focus remains on stakeholder needs
- Enhances the probability of defining meaningful goals to achieve stakeholder (students, faculty, staff, parents, employers, accrediting bodies, legislators, etc.) expectations
- The institution's commitment to stakeholders' satisfaction is enhanced as they realize that their input is valued in the goal and target-setting process
- QFD generates awareness and appreciation of the academic program among all of the stakeholders

Balanced Scorecard (BSC): Structural Framework

- Considers organization's strategies and goals
- Considers final outcome and other perspectives
- Considers leading indicators as the drivers of the final outcome
- Promotes a cause-and-effect relationships between measures

Four Perspectives in the Balanced Scorecard (BSC*) (Accounting, B.A.)

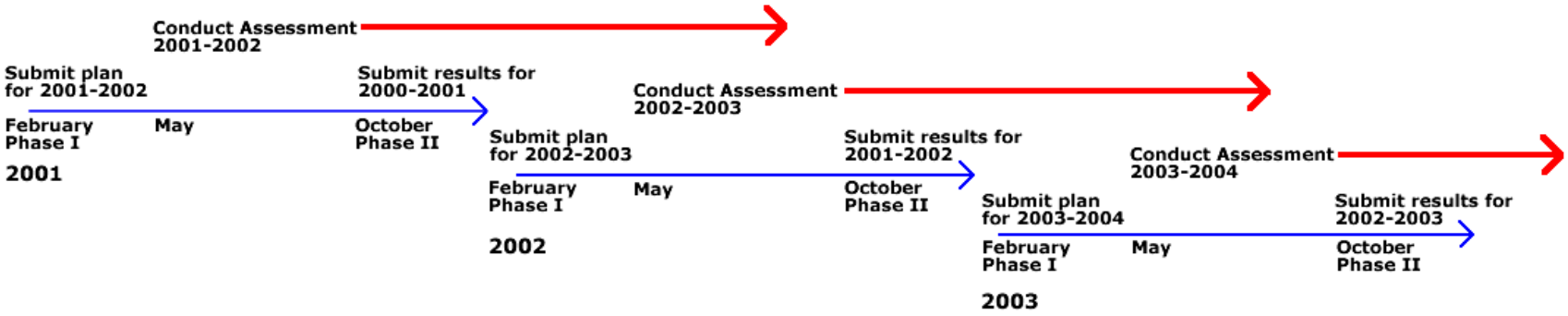


* Adapted from Kaplan and Norton, 1992

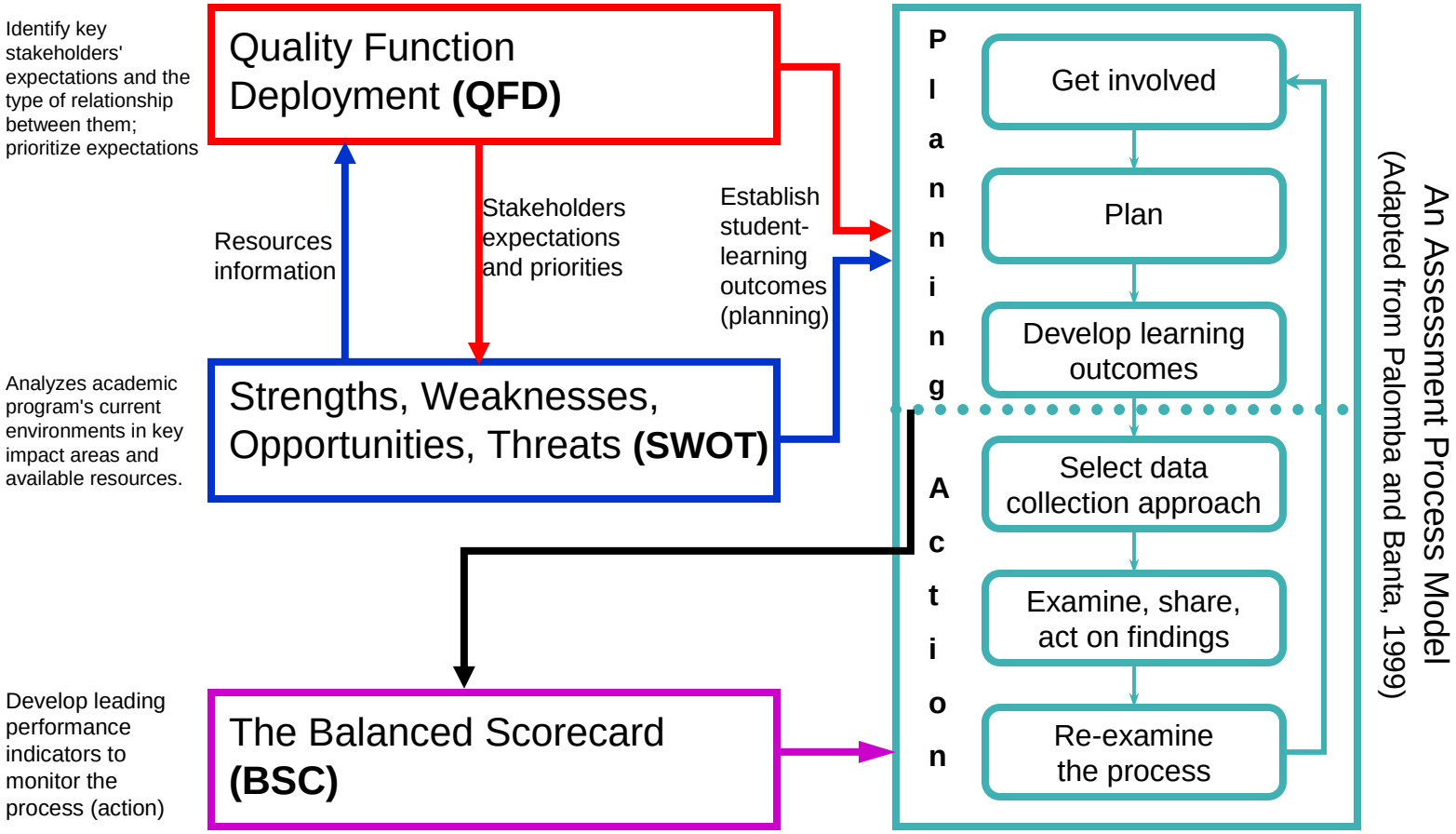
Benefits of BSC to Assessment Planning in Higher Education

- Develops performance measures (leading performance indicators) in three other perspectives affecting the student learning outcomes
- Promotes achievement of student learning outcomes

The UCF Assessment Process Timeline



How Does the Three-Pronged Model Work?



Summary of the Benefits of the Three-Pronged Assessment Model

- The QFD model enhances the assessment planning process by leading to answers to the questions on “what” stakeholders expect and prioritizes the fulfillment of those expectations while considering limited resources and capabilities. It also aids in monitoring the process for improvement
- Conducting the SWOT analysis regularly ensures that all critical forces are considered, both internally and externally, during the development of goals, learning outcomes and the implementation of improvements

Summary of the Benefits of the Three-Pronged Assessment Model (Cont.)

- The BSC model enhances the assessment action phase of the assessment process by establishing a set of performance indicators to promote and monitor achievement of stakeholder satisfaction
- The implementation of this proposed model enhances the viability of the assessment process, thus increasing the potential for identifying weaknesses and subsequently making needed improvements.
- Each of the models can be used separately, however, the use of all three provides an integrated approach to ensure assessment success

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Questions

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OEAS Website: http://www.oeas.ucf.edu/

Assessment Website: http://www.oeas.ucf.edu/default.html