Taskstream Glossary of Terms

I. **Program Outcomes** describe the program's fundamental purpose(s), and how the program contributes to the achievement of the University's mission. When writing Program Outcomes, provide goals for business practices, general operations, or specific initiatives.
    - What are the program's core functions?
    - What major services does the program provide in order to achieve its mission?

In addition, each outcome needs a short, logical title that allows you to easily recognize which outcome you are assessing.

II. **Mapping** is a direct link between a program's objectives and the university's strategic goals.

III. **Assessment methods** are the procedures, techniques, tools, and instruments for collecting information to determine the extent to which the desired outcomes are achieved.
    A. **Method Title** is simply the title of your method.
    B. **Method Type/Method** indicates the type of method: direct or indirect

      i. **Direct Methods** of assessment examine actual results. This measure is powerful because it provides data that correlates exactly with the objective. A direct measure explains what *specific* activity will be undertaken to show the extent to which an objective has been accomplished, and provides information that may be used to make decisions for improvements in the future.

         o Examples: pre/post tests, quantitative reports on accuracy, response time, processes, tracking logs, annual reports

      ii. **Indirect Methods** of assessment are based on individuals' thoughts and perceptions of their experiences. This type of assessment is weaker in terms of evidence because it asks for opinions or perceptions.

         o Examples: surveys, focus groups, discussions, evaluations, interviews

    C. **Criteria for Success** describes the ***desired performance level*** and typically expresses measureable or observable targets.
    D. **Strategies** are the specific actions, tactics, and procedures that will be Implemented in an effort to achieve the goal
    E. **Implementation Plan (timeline)** specifies the timeline for completing tasks identified in the assessment plan.
    F. **Key/Responsible Personnel** identifies who will complete tasks specified in the assessment plan.

IV. **Results** describe the findings as clearly and completely as possible, and are based on the assessment methods and criteria for success. Included are who and/or what were assessed, followed by number(s) assessed.

V. **Use of Results** closes the loop for the assessment cycle and addresses the following:
- Identify the key findings
- Draw conclusions about the program's effectiveness in achieving the stated outcome
- Was the target (criteria for success) achieved?
- What strengths did the assessment reveal?
- Did the assessment spotlight the need for improvements in policy, programs, services, or assessment procedures?