Summary

Justice agencies at all levels face many challenges that can be addressed more successfully when information is shared across organizational boundaries. These challenges differ widely in scope and complexity. One challenge may involve linking diverse databases and case management processes within, say, a county prosecutor's office, where organizational units operate under one executive leader. Another would be enterprise-level initiatives, such as a statewide crime communications network that consists of many different agencies at several levels of government engaged in diverse but overlapping business processes using similar, if not identical, information. Some challenges, such as emergency response, are so extensive that they require information sharing and work processes that cross the boundaries of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Initiatives that depend on this kind of information sharing are typically complex, difficult, and prone to failure. They are more likely to succeed when they include a comprehensive and systematic assessment of both organizational and technical information sharing capabilities. Such an assessment identifies the strengths and weaknesses of all participants and points out risks and risk mitigation strategies, therefore leading to better planning and execution of cross-boundary programs and services.

Publications & Results

Practical Guides (2)

Why Assess Information Sharing Capability?
Thu, 01 Dec 2005

Government faces many challenges that can be addressed more successfully when information is shared across organizational boundaries. Initiatives that depend on these kinds of information sharing are typically complex, difficult, and prone to failure. They are more likely to succeed when they include a comprehensive and systematic assessment of both organizational and technical information sharing capabilities.

Government faces many challenges that can be addressed more successfully when information is shared across organizational boundaries. These challenges differ widely in scope and complexity. One may involve linking the different databases and case management processes in a single human services agency where organizational units operate under one executive leader, working toward a common goal. Another challenge may involve enterprise-level initiatives, such as a statewide crime communications network, consisting of many different agencies at several levels of government engaged in diverse but overlapping business processes using similar, if not identical, information. Some challenges, such as emergency response, are so extensive that they require information sharing and work processes that cross the boundaries of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Initiatives that depend on these kinds of information sharing are typically complex, difficult, and prone to failure. They are more likely to succeed when they include a comprehensive and systematic assessment of both organizational and technical information sharing capabilities. Such an assessment identifies the strengths and weaknesses of all participants, points out risks and risk mitigation strategies, and therefore leads to better planning and execution of cross-boundary programs and services.

Sharing Justice Information: A Capability Assessment Toolkit
Tue, 01 Nov 2005

The justice enterprise faces many performance challenges that can be addressed more successfully through better information-sharing initiatives.This toolkit is designed for justice professionals to use when considering or planning for a justice information-sharing initiative.

The justice enterprise faces many performance challenges that can be addressed more successfully through better information-sharing initiatives. These challenges differ widely in their scope and complexity. Regardless of their size, all these initiatives are made less difficult when participating organizations have high levels of information-sharing capability. Therefore, decisions to invest in informationsharing initiatives must be grounded in a full understanding of the ability of those involved to identify and fill the gaps between current and required capability.

This toolkit is designed for justice professionals to use when considering or planning for a justice information-sharing initiative. It provides a process for assessing where capability for informationsharing exists and where it must be developed in order to achieve public safety goals. Assessment results provide a basis for action planning to fill capability gaps both within and across organizations.

This is a self-assessment tool, based on the idea that the persons involved in an information-sharing initiative are best equipped, by their knowledge and experience, to make judgments and supply evidence about these capabilities. The toolkit was designed to facilitate discussion within individual organizations as well as across organizations involved in an information-sharing initiative.

Reports and Working Papers (1)

Effective Strategies in Justice Information Integration: A Brief Current Practices Review
Thu, 01 Jul 2004

This current practices study contributes to a community-wide knowledge building effort by examining the factors that influenced the success of selected justice information integration initiatives.

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Press Releases & News Stories

Press Releases

UAlbany's Center for Technology in Government Releases Capability Assessment Toolkit
Mon, 03 Apr 2006

U.S. Department of Justice asks CTG to Spearhead Justice Information Sharing Study: Center for Technology in Government Project Designed to Improve Public Safety
Tue, 14 Jan 2003

News Stories

Partners

Government Partners
• United States Department of Justice , Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance
• National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO)
• National Governors Association (NGA)

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Funding Sources

The United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs provided $503,467 from its Discretionary Grant Program, which is designed to identify "what works" in reducing crime, drug use, and violence, and to disseminate that information to state and local practitioners and communities across the country.

Original Scope of Work

The two-year study addressed two key research questions:

- **How can justice organizations assess their current capability for sharing and integrating information?**
- **How can these organizations build higher levels of sharing and integration capability?**

The model was developed through extensive collaboration with justice system practitioners and leadership organizations. These included the National Governor's Association, National Association of State Chief Information Officers, and the Justice Information Sharing Professionals.

The model is designed to produce both holistic assessment profiles and reasonably detailed measures of sharing capabilities and integration levels in a wide range of settings. It will also link assessments to strategies for addressing gaps in capability. This capability model answers the two key questions noted above, plus provides guidance for implementing information sharing policies and initiatives.

The capability of any group of agencies or jurisdictions to improve information sharing and integration is a composite of many kinds of human and technical resources and organizational capacities. No single measure or index can capture the necessary information about the complete situation. In developing these capability assessment tools CTG examined four broad categories of factors: policy, organizational, technology, and data.

Specifically, the model addresses the following questions with respect to the organization(s) involved in or planning a particular information sharing initiative.

- What is the current level or degree of information sharing and integration?
- How effective is it?
- What is the current capability for improving effectiveness of information sharing and integration?
- What strategies and resources are needed to achieve current sharing and integration improvement goals?

The usability of the **Toolkit** was tested in the field in a state-wide initiative, a large city, and a county-level information integration initiative. It was also examined by justice professionals from several smaller jurisdictions for usability and validity in those settings. These field tests were critical to the final Toolkit as they resulted in confirmation of the value of the Toolkit as well as some modifications to the final product.

Related Web Sites

Information Technology Initiatives
http://www.it.ojp.gov/index.jsp

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Information Technology (IT) Initiatives Web site is an Internet-based resource that enables justice practitioners at all levels of government to access timely and useful information about technology integration processes, initiatives, and technological developments. The Web site provides such information as integration profiles for states, case studies, system descriptions and overviews, funding approaches, and models of integrated systems.

Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative

http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic_id=8

The mission of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Advisory Committee is the efficient sharing of data among justice entities. The initiative represents more than thirty independent organizations spanning the spectrum of law enforcement, judicial, correctional, and related bodies, and aids its member organizations and the people they serve through a series of important initiatives.

Justice Standards Clearinghouse
http://it.ojp.gov/jsr/public/index.jsp

The Clearinghouse is a repository of standards and specifications that helps practitioners increase the nation's safety. This dynamic Web site was developed as part of the U.S. Department of Justice interoperability effort to facilitate information sharing. The Web site captures existing standards and alerts users of new or emerging standards. It also provides comment areas for users to offer support for the listed standards.

Justice XML Data Model
http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic_id=43

The Global Justice XML Data Model represents a significant milestone in the process of developing appropriate standards for expressing the baseline data needs of the justice and public safety communities and their related partners. Approximately 16,000 justice and public safety-related data elements were collected from various local and state government sources. These were analyzed and reduced to around 2,000 unique data elements that were then incorporated into about 300 data objects or reusable components. The standardization of the core components resulted in significant potential for increased interoperability among and between justice and public safety information systems.

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