Improvement and Innovation Starter Kit: Assessment -- INSTRUCTIONS: Read each item, then circle a number on the assessment.
Use the 0-to-5 scale to indicate how often this occurs in your workplace:
0 = never   1 = rarely   2= sometimes   3 = recurring   4 = frequently   5 = very often

As you respond to each assessment item, avoid trying to evaluate the agency as a whole. Rather, focus on the work area or office or section or team or crew that you manage, and maintain this same scope throughout the assessment. If you do not manage a given office or section, narrow your scope to your own immediate work area. Then, proceed to page 2.

	Situation	Rating Never - Very Often
1	My co-workers and I have a lot of good thoughts about things we could do to improve our work and our work areas. If we got organized around some of those ideas, we could make some things better for ourselves.	0 1 2 3 4 5
2	Other people – like others who do work similar to ours - may have figured out better ways to do things. If we could learn about some of those improvements and duplicate them for our group, it would probably help us.	0 1 2 3 4 5
3	In my work area, we spend too much time looking for the items we need to do our jobs: files, materials, equipment, and so on. If the physical work area was better organized, we'd be more productive and less frustrated.	0 1 2 3 4 5
4	When we get inputs from customers or from other sources (from paper forms or online web forms, for example), we often find that the incoming information is incomplete or inaccurate. We have to circle back to people to get the information we need. If we received complete information from them the first time around, we'd be a lot more efficient.	0 1 2 3 4 5
5	We find ourselves wondering what our customers are thinking. Are we meeting their needs and expectations? Are they happy with our work? Are there things we can do to increase their satisfaction? If we had answers to these questions, we could serve our customers better.	0 1 2 3 4 5
6	My co-workers and I don't really know whether our day-to-day work is having a positive impact. We can't tell for sure whether it's meeting customer expectations, helping the agency achieve larger goals, or contributing in some other way. If we had a set of meaningful measures that were easy to see and understand, we'd have a better sense of how our work makes a difference.	0 1 2 3 4 5
7	Sometimes, when my co-workers and I do something at work, we encounter difficulties. We get through it, and we just move on. Then, when we do that same thing again, we often run into difficulties – again!! And that's frustrating and wasteful. If we took time afterwards, identified what went wrong and actually did something about it, we'd be a lot better off.	0 1 2 3 4 5
8	I work with good people; however, it sometimes seems like one person doesn't know what the other person is doing, even though we all work in the same work process. If we had a better sense of what each person does and how we all fit together as one system, we'd be more productive (and probably even happier).	0 1 2 3 4 5
9	We've been getting complaints from our customers. We respond the best we can, but it's on a case-by-case basis. If we dug deeper to understand what's causing the complaints – and if we went on to fix those underlying causes – we would end the complaints and set the stage for some compliments.	0 1 2 3 4 5
10	The work process that I work in moves too slowly. If we took the time to step back and fully analyze the process, we'd come up with major improvements to the workflow.	0 1 2 3 4 5
11	When my co-workers and I talk about our work and our overall work process, we talk mostly about negative things: delays, rework, overwork, red tape, confusion, and so on. If we as a group had the opportunity and guidance to dig deep and rework the process, we would develop some big improvements.	0 1 2 3 4 5

	If this is your situation (score of 3 or higher on the assessment on page 1) …	**… here are useful improvement and innovation tools, methods and approaches that can help:**
1	*My co-workers and I have a lot of good thoughts about things we could to do improve our work and our work areas.*	**Lean Everyday Ideas** Lean Everyday Ideas are improvements and innovations where one person (or a small group of people) will: 1) identify a problem or opportunity; 2) develop an innovative way of doing something better to solve that problem or seize upon that opportunity; 3) test that innovative way, to make sure it works; 4) implement it; and then 5) share it, so that others can also benefit from it and duplicate it.
2	*Other people – like others who do work similar to ours - may have figured out better ways to do things.*	
3	*In my work area, we spend too much time looking for the items we need to do our jobs: files, materials, equipment, and so on.*	**6S (5S, plus Safety)** 6S stands for sort, straighten, shine, standardize, sustain, and safety. The 6S process, which can be used individually (for your own work area) or by a group, is used to create and maintain well-organized, effective and efficient work areas.
4	*When we get inputs from customers or from other sources (from paper forms or online web forms), we often find that the incoming information is incomplete or inaccurate.*	**Mistake Proofing** Mistake Proofing is all about putting measures in place to prevent errors from occurring as a process unfolds. In government, a big mistake-proofing improvement opportunity relates to forms, because forms that arrive with incorrect or incomplete information require extra processing time.
5	*We find ourselves wondering what our customers are thinking. Are we meeting their needs and expectations? Are they happy with our work?*	**Voice of the Customer** When it comes to improvement, understanding the customer's spoken and unspoken requirements for the products/services we provide is essential. You can develop different approaches, including interviews, surveys, polls, focus groups, complaint logs, and more.
6	*My co-workers and I don't really know whether our work is having a positive impact. We can't tell for sure whether it's meeting customer expectations, helping the agency achieve larger goals, or contributing in some other way.*	**Meaningful Metrics & Visual Management** If you keep an eye on the scoreboard when watching sporting events, you know what this is about. By having a select few measures that show how well the process is doing, and by developing a dashboard or some other visual to make those measures readily visible and easy to comprehend, everyone can feel a greater sense of ownership.
7	*Sometimes, when my co-workers and I do something, we encounter difficulties. We get through it, and we just move on. Then, when we do that same thing again, we often run into difficulties – again!! And that's frustrating and wasteful.*	**After-Action Reviews (AARs)** An After Action Review (AAR) is a structured review and de-briefing method for analyzing what happened, why it happened, and how it can be done better by the participants and those responsible for a specific activity, project or event – and then taking action to make things better in the future. Basic considerations are: 1) What was supposed to happen? 2) What actually did happen, and why? 3) What are some improvements we will make for things that did not go well, and who will make those improvements (by when)? 4) What are some sustainments for things that did go well?
8	*I work with good people, but it sometimes seems like one person doesn't know what the other person is doing, even though we all work in the same work process.*	**Process Mapping** A well-constructed process map makes the entire workflow visible. It shows inputs, work steps, decisions, work flows, outputs, and more. This allows people who work in one part of the process to see how their works fits into the larger system – and it gives people the visual they need to pinpoint occurrences of inefficiency.
9	*We've been getting complaints from our customers. We respond the best we can, but it's on a case-by-case basis.*	**Structured Process Improvement ("A3" method)** Process improvement can be scaled to fit your situation and intended outcomes. • A full Rapid Improvement Event typically involves five straight days of improvement work. The RIE team consists of people who work in all the various stages of the process, and there's usually a customer or two. With guidance from a RIE facilitator, the team maps the process, pinpoints issues and difficulties, identifies improvement opportunities, develops an improved process, and builds action plans to ensure implementation.
10	*The work process that I work in moves too slowly.*	• Local Improvement projects use many of the same tools that are put to work in a full RIE event. But it uses them on smaller processes and sub-processes. This narrower scope focuses on clearly defined "pain points" that clearly call for improvement. When properly scoped, this can be completed in one full day – or in five 90-minute meetings over the course of several weeks, or in two half-day meetings, and so on.
11	*When my co-workers and I talk about our work and our overall work process, we talk mostly about negative things: delays, rework, overwork, red tape, confusion, and so on.*	• You can use process improvement tools on an even smaller scale. Perhaps you want to develop your own process map to see and improve the work steps for which you are solely responsible. Or perhaps you get together with two co-workers to map out and improve a small process that you are responsible for together.