## CONTENTS

**EDITORS’ NOTES**  
*James W. Altschuld, Ryan Watkins*  
1. A Primer on Needs Assessment: More Than 40 Years of Research and Practice  
*James W. Altschuld, Ryan Watkins*  
This chapter provides an overview of needs assessment’s rich history, definitions, models, tools, and techniques that closely align its theory, research, and practice and its association with several other fields, notably strategic planning and evaluation.

*Ryan Watkins, Jolanta Kavale*  
The nagging concern over numerous definitions of a “need” and how those definitions affect the assessment of needs are the focus of this chapter.

3. Needs Assessment: The Perspective From the Public Sector  
*Molly Engle, James W. Altschuld*  
While looking at needs is commonly done in many public-sector agencies, the authors question how it is done and if it focuses too narrowly on deficits or gaps and not incorporating assets.

4. Needs Assessments in the Private Sector  
*John Wedman*  
In this chapter, the author examines how needs assessments can identify solutions that will improve individual and group performance, as well as produce valued business results.

5. Needs Assessments to Determine Training Requirements  
*Traci Lepichti, Adrienne Boggs*  
This chapter describes needs assessment within the context of a specific workforce development project, offering the assessment process, phases, and levels, and the implications and lessons learned when considering training needs.

6. International Perspectives: Similarities and Differences Around the Globe  
*Maurya West Meiers, Ryan Watkins, Kristin Marsh Song*  
Needs assessments are occurring across the globe and these authors not only provide examples of such practice, but they also give useful guidelines for how to navigate the choppy waters of culture and tradition.
7. Needs Assessment and Asset/Capacity Building: A Promising Development in Practice
James W. Altschuld, Hsin-Ling (Sonya) Hung, Yi-Fang Lee
For a period of time, there have been sharp criticisms of the premise of needs (starting from deficits) as opposed to asset-based planning and a hybrid model of the two as a new approach to planning and development is explained.

8. A Final Note About Improving Needs Assessment Research and Practice
Ryan Watkins, James W. Altschuld
As the practice of needs assessment evolves, newer methods are appearing on the scene as well as the necessity for conducting practical, applied research on the conduct of assessment.