The Performance Institute

ResultsFocus ™

A Method for Executing New Initiatives and Performance Analytics in Government

Survey Results and White Paper
May 16, 2016

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AIM.
ALIGN.
ACHIEVE.

2016 Survey of Government Executives

How effectively are government agencies implementing performance management systems?

This is the question the Performance Institute sought to answer with our latest survey of government program managers. Since the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act more than two decades ago, government agencies have sought to define goals and performance measures, implement new strategies, and utilize data to improve program results.

After surveying over 1000 government managers between May 2015 and January 2016, the results show a mixed bag for the implementation of performance management systems in government.

First the Institute identified 10 common performance management initiatives being used or promoted in government. Then for each initiative, we asked survey respondents to tell us how important, useful, or valuable they believe the initiative is. Finally, we asked survey respondents to tell us "how would you rate the current implementation status achieved by your program or agency for this initiative?"

	IMPORTANCE	STATUS
Improving internal processes: quality and efficiency	3.69	2.11
Measuring and reporting the outcomes of federal programs	3.63	2.36
Evaluating program performance	3.63	2.29
Developing clear strategies to achieve results	3.61	2.26
Using evidence to formulate policy and program strategies	3.52	2.29
Using performance information to make decisions	3.50	2.20
Reporting results to stakeholders and the public	3.49	2.24
Evaluating employee performance	3.45	2.15
Tying budget requests to program performance	3.30	2.14
Benchmarking performance	3.25	2.25

1041 Survey Responses, May 2015-Janaury 2016 – results based on a 4-point scale (4 Highest, 3 High, 2 Low, 1 Lowest)

Top Barriers to Executing New Initiatives in Government

Ideas for improving government performance are plenty – and with each new Administration a variety of new initiatives and policy prescriptions are attempted. Unfortunately, many political appointees have expressed frustration that their new initiatives took much longer to implement than they expected – and in many cases, the new initiatives never quite got off the ground.

In our qualitative assessments, The Performance Institute has identified five major barriers to executing new initiatives in government. Indeed, many initiatives are abandoned out of frustration well before full implementation, resulting in higher operating costs and confusion regarding priorities. But there are exceptions to these generalizations, and the barriers to achieving great results from major new initiatives can be overcome with careful planning and effective implementation management.

Our research suggests five general issues often limit the effectiveness of major new initiatives:

- *The Vision Barrier* – typically only a very small percentage of the workforce genuinely understand the strategy of the organization or the purpose of the new initiative

- *The Requirements Barrier* – because new initiatives are undertaken with a very incomplete understanding of the requirements for success or the operational implications

- *The Resource Barrier* – because full requirements are not understood, often adequate resources are not secured or mobilized to conduct the full range of activities required to successfully implement the program

- *The Measurement Barrier* – because the full scope of activities are not well understood and adequate progress measures are not defined, management has a very limited ability to monitor implementation progress and fails to adjust the implementation plan in response to problems or changes

- *The Leadership Barrier* – lacking adequate tools and procedures to effectively lead the implementation effort, management often disappears into the background causing the organization to question priorities and lose focus on achieving the original goals

Overcoming each of these five barriers requires a comprehensive methodology for setting clear direction of your vision, defining clear requirements for getting the vision achieved, resourcing the initiative properly (budget, acquisitions, personnel, etc.), tracking execution through measurement and monitoring, and applying appropriate leadership when obstacles are encountered.

Performance Management Maturity Model Assessment

As government leaders attempt to overcome the five barriers to implementing their new initiatives, a key question must be answered: ***what is the current capability of your government agency to actually implement new initiatives properly?***

Answering this question has typically involved a gut check by new agency leaders. Unfortunately, gut checks may not accurately capture the true capabilities (or lack thereof) in a complex government entity.

As a result, The Performance Institute has developed a comprehensive assessment tool to gauge whether a federal program (or in a larger sense an entire agency) is prepared to implement a complex new initiative. After answering 72 questions on a variety of management capacities, the Performance Institute is able to categorize a program or agency into one of five levels of maturity.

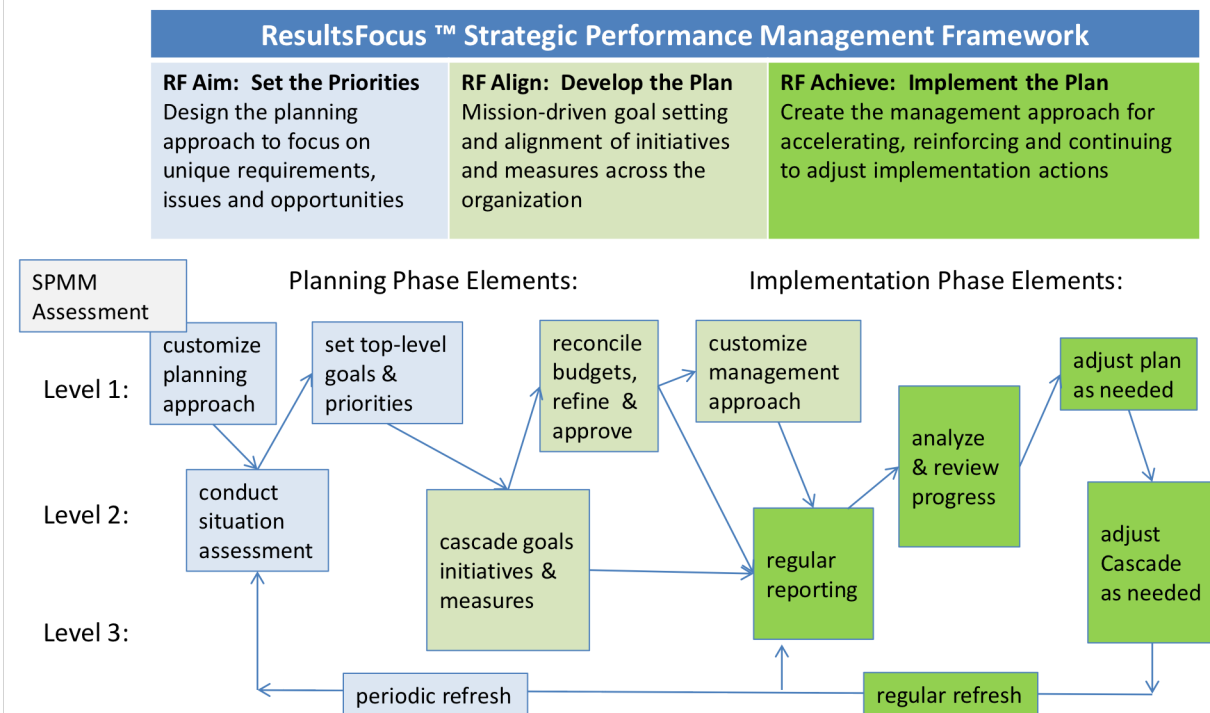| Performance Management Maturity Model		
Levels		**Descriptions**
5	**Leading**	* The organization meets and exceeds outcome goals. * Strategies are revised based on evidence to achieve greatest impact on improving outcomes ("outcome optimization"). * Organization provides clear transparency of cost and performance achievements to internal and external stakeholders.
4	**Managing**	* Performance information and evidence-based analysis is used by management to "optimize" the efficiency and quality standards of activities, processes and outputs ("output optimization"). * Individual investments, programs, and support functions are prioritized and managed using data analytics and a clear "business case" of performance linkage to organizational strategies and results.
3	**Measuring**	* Measures tracking operational efficiencies and mission results are defined. * The organization can fully report status of mission, goals, and efficiency of activities – and conducts top-level program evaluations. * Data systems produce timely, relevant and accurate performance information.
2	**Aligning**	* Programs have been aligned to organizational goals and a clear definition of requirements made.
1	**Planning**	* Organizational mission and goals have been set to reflect a unique purpose and need. * Strategies to achieve each organizational goal have been articulated based on clear analysis of internal and external operating landscape. * Activities and associated resources identified to achieve goals.
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ResultsFocus™ Implementation Methodology

Once a government leader understands the current capability of their program or agency to execute complex new initiatives using the Performance Management Maturity Model, it is possible to expedite and aid new initiatives using the ResultsFocus Methodology - the Performance Institute's framework for guiding the planning and implementation of major strategic initiatives inside government.

The ResultsFocus Methodology framework covers the three critical phases that heavily influence both the speed and the success of implementation. It has been specifically designed to overcome the most common reasons for failure, and if followed, this approach can significantly improve the likelihood of achieving the intended results.

ResultsFocus™

A Customizable Framework for Developing and Implementing an Integrated Strategic Management Program

ResultsFocus ™ Strategic Performance Management Framework		
RF Aim: Set the Priorities Design the planning approach to focus on unique requirements, issues and opportunities	**RF Align: Develop the Plan** Mission-driven goal setting and alignment of initiatives and measures across the organization	**RF Achieve: Implement the Plan** Create the management approach for accelerating, reinforcing and continuing to adjust implementation actions

RF Aim – Clarifying Goals, Priorities and Implementation Approach

Any effective approach for planning and implementing major new strategies or initiatives must be customized to address the specific needs, constraints, capabilities, goals and challenges of the intended program and the effected organization. That begins with understanding in detail the scope of the new initiative and the elements of the organization that must be involved to achieve successful implementation. With the benefit of a focused situation assessment, extraneous planning activities can be eliminated and effort can be applied to addressing those issues most needing to be resolved. Based on the analysis of these key requirements, senior leaders can develop clear and concise messages about the intended new program, its overall goals, and the critical activities that need to be completed to achieve success.

RF Align – Defining Required Implementation Actions and Key Performance Measures

The key to achieving successful implementation is to engage the organization in a process that specifically aligns their objectives and actions with the overall goals of the program. Making this cascade of activities a genuine two-way conversation has the added benefits of identifying unanticipated problems early and uncovering ideas and insights about best approaches that are often found deep inside the organization. With the benefit of this added level of detail about the program, resource decisions and budgets can be more accurately aligned with needs. Mobilization of those resources improves with the added involvement and understanding of key participants across the organization. And as broadly defined goals are made more explicit by detailed actions and measures, leadership gains greater ability to track implementation progress by more closely monitoring these leading indicators.

RF Achieve – Proactively Leading Implementation Success

Too many major initiatives falter – not because of poor planning but because of lack of sustained leadership focus throughout their implementation. Often this is because there has been too little effort has been put into defining how this particular organization is going to manage the implementation of the program. Without clearly defining what gets reported, by whom, when, to whom, and what then happens, the historical and day-to-day management practices tend to overwhelm focus on the new initiative. As the organization sees leadership paying less and less attention to the program, they revert into status quo

RF AIM
Strategic Assessment
Evidence-Based Analysis
Stakeholder Assessment
Policy Development
Legislative Sanction
Administration Sanction
Strategic Plan
Int. Communications Plan

RF ALIGN
Requirements Analysis
Program Alignment
Enterprise Architecture
Budget Alignment
HR-Personnel Alignment
Employee Engagement
Acquisition Alignment
Partner Alignment (Fed, State, Local)
Annual Performance Plan
Performance Measurement System
Data Analytics Approach
Change Management Plan

RF ACHIEVE
PerformanceSTAT Reviews
Innovation Labs and Competitions
Lean-Six Sigma and Process Improvement
Intervention Initiatives
Performance Reporting
Program Evaluation
Ext. Communication Plan

behaviors which undermine focus on needed actions. Defining and implementing a "PerformanceStat" management approach to tracking the status of implementation actions is essential for success. Implementing simple tools to track progress and ensure follow-through on commitments can be a valuable communications accelerator. The definition of effective change reinforcement actions such as regular discussion forums, recognition programs, and status communications by senior leadership can sustain organizational enthusiasm. And most importantly, the visible importance attached to the program by the actions and continued participation of these senior leaders is generally acknowledged to be the primary contributor success.

As The Performance Institute implements the ResultsFocus Methodology, a comprehensive system of plans, goals, initiatives, and performance measures are captured in a logic model to provide full transparency and alignment for agency leadership – and in a format that provides for full implementation of management mandates such as the Government Performance and Results Act.

Performance Logic Model Framework
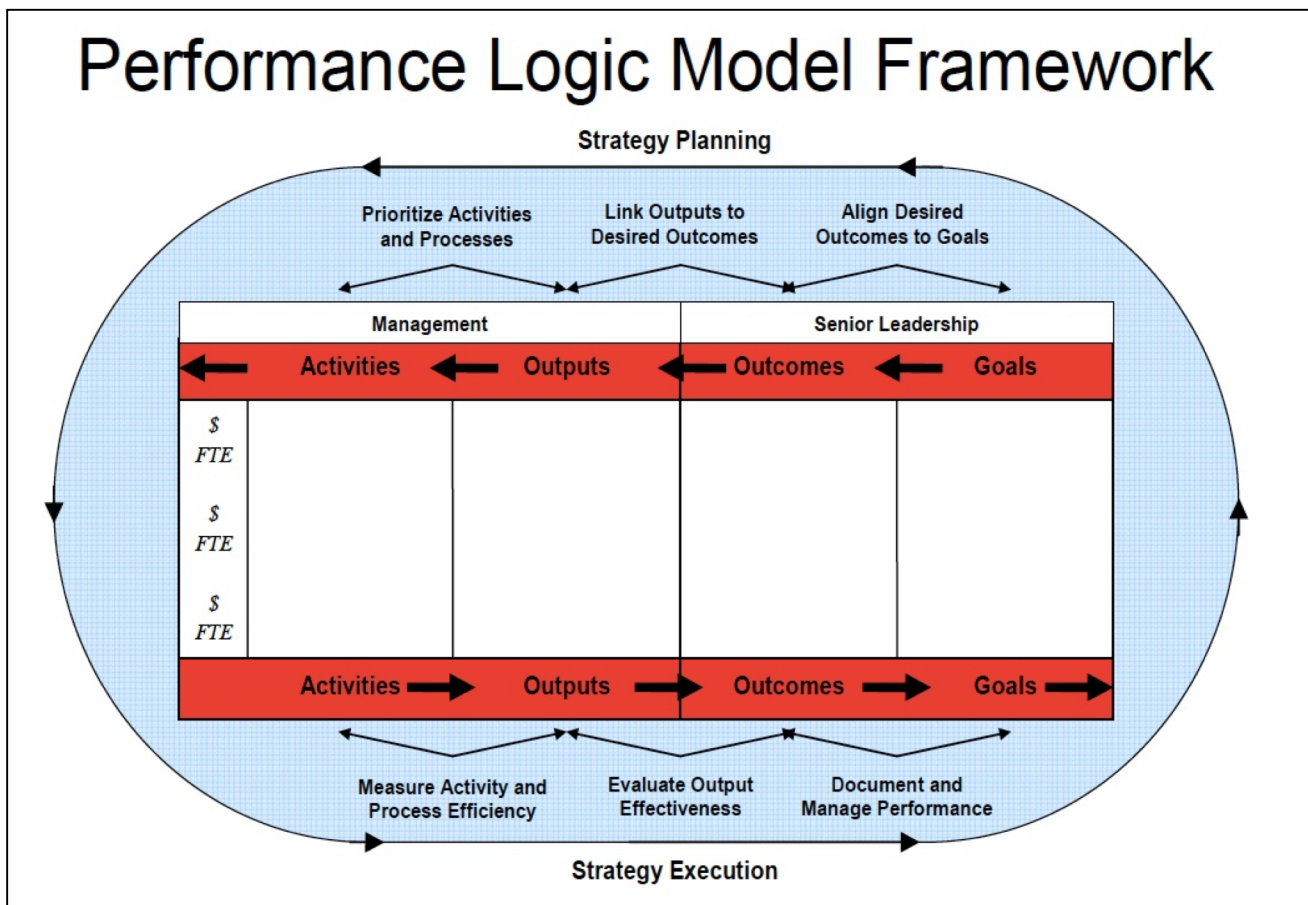
Case Examples: ResultsFocus™ In Action in Government

What could be more controversial than implementing body cameras with police officers? The ResultsFocus method was successfully utilized by a local law enforcement agency to overcome resistance and properly execute a new, complex, and highly political initiative of equipping a local police force with body cameras.

A new police chief made a commitment in a medium-sized community to utilize the emerging technology of body cameras. The chief determined that the agency would be resistant to change (e.g. the police union was wary of body cameras) and had consulted with other law enforcement agencies that had encountered internal capacity problems with their implementation of body cameras (insufficient IT capabilities, improper officer training, lack of proper funding, contracting/procurement challenges, etc.)

RF-AIM: Based on a strategic assessment, the police chief was able to develop up-front a clear policy, strategic plan, and internal communications plan – as well as secure Executive and Legislative (City Council) approval and support. Expectations were clearly defined up-front with the goal of setting the bar low for what could be achieved.

RF-ALIGN: The Chief worked with each agency division (patrol, HR, budget, procurement, IT) to force them to define up-front all of their requirements for successfully implementing the initiative. Based on the significant requirements these program areas identified, the Chief decided to implement body cameras in only one-fourth of his department's force. The Chief also developed clear performance measures up-front (number of incidents of use of force, number of allegations against officers) and established a monthly Stat review meeting for the initiative.

RF-ACHIEVE: As implementation occurred, the Stat meetings surfaced a problem with officers not turning on their cameras at each incident. To correct this, the Chief launched an intervention initiative to improve compliance with the body camera requirements. After six months, a program evaluation was conducted using performance data. The results? Use-of-force and allegations against police officers were both down significantly in the portion of the police force that was using body cameras compared to same officers in previous periods and the officers not utilizing body cameras. With a success story in hand, the Chief devised an external communications plan to roll out the success to the Mayor, City Council, stakeholders, media, and community members. As a result of this success, and minor implementation problems surfaced through the test phase, the Chief won budgetary support for full implementation of body cameras in his Department.

Transition 2016: ResultsFocus™ Implementation Opportunities

The Performance Institute is gearing up its work with federal agencies and programs in anticipation of a bevy of new initiatives launched as a result of the 2016 Presidential Transition.

No matter who wins the presidency in 2016, the challenge of using performance data to make better decisions in each federal agency remains a bipartisan issue. With the dawn of each new Administration, new political appointees arrive with big and bold ideas on how to change policy in each program and mission area in their agency. What data will they use? How can they frame evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes for taxpayers in each mission area? What criteria can be used to fund what works?

The Performance Institute will tackle the cross-cutting, government-wide challenge of engaging new Administration political appointees in each federal department with the goal of educating them and assisting them on establishing a data-driven and performance analytics system within their department.

The Performance Institute has planned at least four key deliverables for this research initiative:

- **Federal Department/Agency/Program Assessments**: Research, validate, and publish a Performance Management Maturity Model Assessment (PMMM) methodology that each federal department can use to evaluate the suitability and maturity of its internal data, performance measurement, and analytics capabilities. The goal will be to identify specific gaps within each Department that the incoming political appointees can be aware of and address. The PMMM assessment will be published government-wide for use as a self-assessment tool, but the GPC will conduct the assessment for each federal department member of the GPC. The PMMM assessment will assess issues such as:
    - (a) Mission-driven strategies
    - (b) Setting transformational goals
    - (c) Evidence-based strategies
    - (d) Outcome measures
    - (e) Program alignment to outcomes
    - (f) Program performance measures
    - (g) Data Analytics for program insights
    - (h) Employee Engagement
    - (i) High impact Performance Stat reviews
    - (j) Investment optimization through portfolio analysis
    - (k) Open government transparency

- **Pilot Projects:** Identify five pilot projects for utilization of the ResultsFocus Methodology. Work with pilot projects to define strategies and execute performance data systems, evidence models, and funding approach to foster innovation and improved outcomes.

- **Certification of Government Performance Leaders**: For pilot projects, provide training and certification for up to 7 agency staff who will be implementers in any data-driven, evidence-based performance management program for the agency.

- **Transition Policy Forums and Briefings**: As part of its ongoing involvement in the Transition 2016 Initiative, The Performance Institute will be providing policy forums for incoming political appointees on our research into government transformation and performance management, data-driven and evidence-based decision-making, and program planning and evaluation.

Contact

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The Performance Institute is currently in discussions with several federal departments examining the use of ResultsFocus within their organization to assist in the 2016 Transition. To schedule a time to discuss your possible interest in these discussions, contact Mike Morello at 202-701-4349 or Mike.Morello@PerformanceInstitute.org