

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT MATTERS

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

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INSIDE

Performance Measurement and the Competitiveness Model	1
PM Website	1
Brownbag Lunches	
Continuously Improve	1
Calendar of PM Events for 2000	2

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND THE COMPETITIVENESS MODEL

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If you were going to buy a personal computer (PC) today, you would identify the fastest, high-quality machine your budget could afford. The 486's of a few years ago would not even be considered. It would have to have a Pentium-type processor; a bigger monitor, probably a CD-ROM, AND it would cost less than previous models! The speed with which technology is evolving has emphasized a culture in which consumers automatically expect better, faster, and cheaper. Furthermore, this cultural emphasis extends beyond the technology realm. Customers expect better, faster, and cheaper for all goods and services. Government is no exception. These expectations present a challenge for the public sector, but one that governments at all levels are rising to meet. Yesterday's practices, while good, may not be good enough in the future.

Fairfax County's population is expected to reach one million by 2005. Other socio-demographic factors will also likely influence the types and quantity of service delivered to County residents. And financial resources, while growing moderately, are limited, so Fairfax County cannot expect to solve every problem with more funding. Managers will be challenged as never before to provide the highest quality services at the lowest possible cost. Many are already doing this. To meet this challenge, the County Executive charged the Competitiveness

Model Task Force with developing an ongoing, Countywide structure to ensure that Fairfax County remains competitive throughout the 21st Century.

In December 1999, the Competitiveness Model Task Force reported on their model to the County Executive and to department heads across the County. The Task Force's model emphasizes an *ongoing continuous improvement process* on the part of *all agencies*. The model focuses on agencies developing a systematic way of assessing their performance and implementing improvements as a regular and routine part of doing business. It also identifies an approach for more intensive efforts to improve program performance, which would involve a few programs each year.

The Competitiveness Model, under the aegis of a Countywide Steering Committee, is driven by the efforts of each department, with directors and their staffs playing critical roles in assessing agency performance and implementing strategies for improvement. The Task Force identified tools and technical assistance as critical elements to assist agencies in implementing the Competitiveness Model.

Performance measurement is a key tool in the continuous improvement work envisioned by the Task Force, along with benchmarking, strategic planning, and involving employees and customers in the measurement and improvement process. Much of this work has already started with the Performance Measurement (PM) System put into place nearly three years ago. This system, developed by the Department of Management and Budget (DMB) and the multi-agency PM Team, requires agencies to report on sets of measures for key service-related objectives. The data are updated each year as part of the budget cycle. Furthermore, DMB and the PM Team have developed a number of courses on measuring performance, tracking customer satisfaction, using data to monitor performance, and beginning this spring — benchmarking. They have provided technical assistance to agencies needing further help in developing and implementing their system of measures.

For many agencies, the objectives and sets of measures already

assess and report on key service areas for continuous improvement. Some directors are using those measures as a way of monitoring the performance of their agencies. The goal of the Competitiveness Model is to expand the use of performance measurement, benchmarking, and other tools as part of a Countywide, ongoing continuous improvement process. The Task Force has been working closely with the PM Team to link these efforts.

Brownbag Lunches Continuously Improve

Based on requests from agencies, a Brownbag Lunch series was initiated in early 1999 to provide a forum for discussion, information sharing, and skills development.

Beginning in February 2000, the Brownbag Lunches will be jointly sponsored by the PM Team and the Competitiveness Model Task Force. The lunches will provide an opportunity to explore the use of performance measurement as a continuous improvement tool and to learn about both benchmarking as a means of assessing competitiveness, and the ongoing improvement strategies of other agencies. They will build on performance measurement by exploring new topics related to continuous improvement and the Competitiveness Model. Additionally, the lunches will present a forum for speakers to share their expertise in particular areas such as business process redesign and other strategies to improve performance, and continue to provide a place for all interested staff to share ideas. We think the new Brownbag Lunches will be better than ever. Please join us in the coming year. (*Editor's Note: The complete schedule of Brownbag Lunches is shown on the 2000 Calendar on page two.*)

Visit the PM Website:

<http://infoweb/omb/pfmeasure.htm>



Calendar of Performance Management Events for 2000

The following lists many of the major performance measurement activities that will take place during 2000. For the first time, this list is being provided in early January to enable you to schedule any events of interest on your calendar for the year. Please note that there will be

separate registration announced for the training events approximately 3-4 weeks before each class. Or you can note the particular dates of interest to you and contact Cathy Spage (324-4079) at least 3 weeks before the class date. Keep in mind also that the Benchmarking Class is still under development and the tentative March date will likely be supplemented with additional classes. Stay tuned for details.

ON IMAGINATION



Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited, while imagination embraces the entire world.

Albert Einstein

PM Events for 2000		
EVENT	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
PM/Continuous Improvement Brownbag Lunch	February 10, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, Government Center (GC)
Benchmarking Training	March 21, 2000 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC (other dates and locations to be added)
Brownbag Lunch	April 6, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Basic PM Training	April 27, 2000 (2 classes) 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Advanced PM Training – Managing for Results	April 28, 2000 (2 classes) 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Data Collection Class	May 4, 2000 (2 classes) 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Surveying for Customer Satisfaction Class	May 5, 2000 (2 classes) 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Basic PM Training	May 11, 2000 8:30-11:30 a.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Advanced PM Training – Managing for Results	May 11, 2000 1:00-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Brownbag Lunch	June 15, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Brownbag Lunch	August 3, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Brownbag Lunch	October 5, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Brownbag Lunch	December 7, 2000 Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC

MORE ON IMAGINATION



Consistency is the last resort of the unimaginative.

Oscar Wilde

You Tell Us

If there are any topics of interest you would like to see addressed in future issues of this PM Newsletter, or have any relevant questions answered, please forward those suggestions or questions to Barbara Emerson in the Department of Management and Budget (e-mail BEMERS).

Performance Measurement Matters is published quarterly by the PM Team. Editor: Barbara Emerson, Technical Support by Frann Shurnitski, Department of Management and Budget. Advisory staff: Sara Simmons, Department of Planning and Zoning.