

*Results and Performance Accountability:
Training for Trainers and Coaches*

The Teaching and Coaching Construction Kit

Fiscal Policy Studies Institute
www.resultsaccountability.com

June, 2000
(rev 3/2002)

Results and Performance Accountability: Training for Trainers and Coaches

Introduction

This design of this workbook grows out of the belief that teaching and coaching any subject must be grounded in the teacher or coach's personal experience. The workbook is designed to allow each person to create a unique approach to teaching and coaching based on their own personal reasons , stories and examples.

There are three principle learning results for participants at the end of the Training for Trainers and Coaches:

1. Be able to teach a personal version of the basics of results and performance accountability
2. Be able to lead a group in the results and performance turn the curve exercises
3. Be able to coach a state, county or community group working on implementation

This workbook is a first generation product and will be revised and improved as we gain experience. Your feedback and suggestions are both welcome and important. This workbook should be used in conjunction with the "Results and Performance Accountability, Decision-making and Budgeting Workshop Materials", the Video training on Results and Performance Accountability, and the Results and Performance Accountability Implementation guide at www.raguide.org. (Information on these and other resources can be found at the FPSI website: www.resultsaccountabilty.com.)

Note: Preparation of this document was supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Government and non-profit organizations may copy and distribute this material provided they do so with attribution, and in the interest of improving child, family, adult or community well-being.

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PART I
RESULTS ACCOUNTABILITY

This section of the training addresses results accountability for whole populations in a given geographic area (neighborhood, school district, city, county, state or nation).

Thinking Process and Tools: Answer each question on the basis of your personal experience. Each answer should start something like: "In my experience, having a common language is important because..." Use stories, anecdotes and examples from your career and your life. (Telling stories is one of the best ways to teach.) And make note of pictures, cartoons or graphics which can help you communicate these ideas to others. Add to your answers from the small group and large group discussion.

Techniques: Practice each decision making technique with the members of your learning group. Take turns leading the work. Make notes of what you learn from this practice.

Tough Questions: Help identify the toughest questions an audience might ask. Then take a crack at your best answer and make notes about other ways to respond from the group discussion.

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
<p>1. Why should we care about the well-being of our children,youth, adults, elders, families and communities?</p> <p>Note: The well-being of communities includes economic and environmental well-being.</p>			
<p>2. Why is common language important?</p>			

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
<p>3. Why is it important to work on cross community conditions of well-being (for children adults and families) (RESULTS) as opposed to just individual programs?</p>			
<p>4. Why is it important to track results in measureable terms (INDICATORS)?</p> <p>Why is a data development agenda important?</p>			<p>5</p>

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
5. Why are BASELINES (with history and forecast) better than point to point promises of success?			
6. Why does the STORY BEHIND THE BASELINES help us figure out what works?			6

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
7. Why is it important to bring PARTNERS to the table? Why is it important for involvement to be broad and diverse?			
8. Why should we worry about WHAT WORKS and what doesn't? Why should we think about no-cost / low-cost contributions?			7

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
9. If we can't do everything this year, what CRITERIA should we use to choose what to do first?			
10. Why is it important to go through this thinking process more than once? What is the value of doing this fast and then ITERATING?			8

Results-Based Decision Making

Getting from Talk to Action

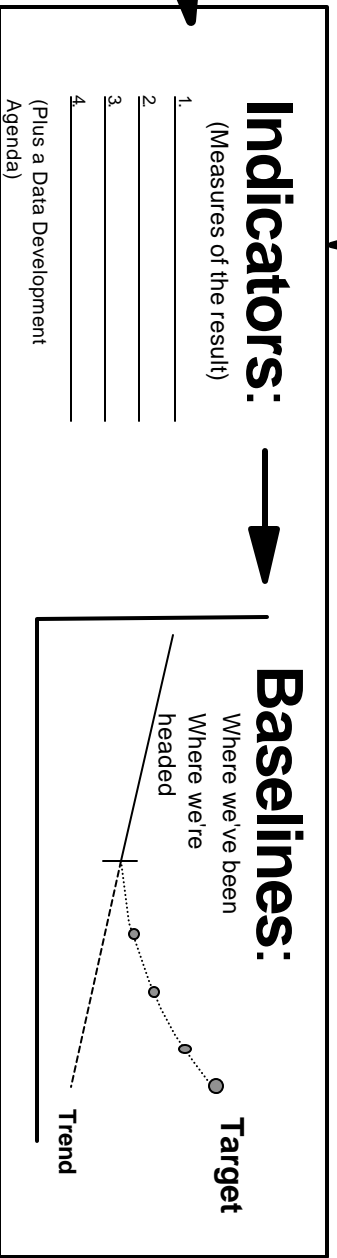
Population: e.g. Children prenatal to age 5



Result: e.g. Children enter school healthy and ready to learn



What we want for children in plain English, plain Spanish... Plus how we "experience" the result



Story behind the baselines:

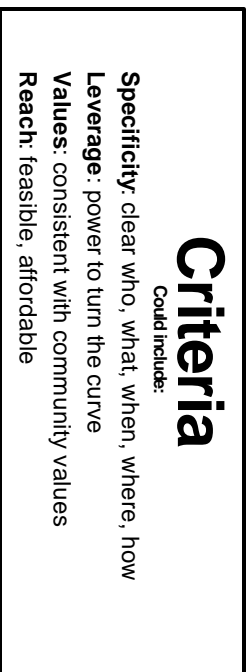
The causes, the forces at work; the epidemiology of the baselines
(plus information/research agenda part 1)

Partners with a role to play:

Public and private sector agencies and individuals

What works →

What would it take to turn the curve in this community, best practices, best hunches
(plus information research agenda part 2)



Action Plan and Budget →

What we propose to do: multi-year action plan and budget

How the "what works" pieces fit together in a **community system** of services and supports

Performance Measures: Measures of how well programs, services, supports, agencies and service systems, included in the action plan, are working

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S REPORT CARD (or Elders Report Card)
(or Report Card on "Prosperous Economy or "Clean Environment"

What's in it?

What can it be used for that would improve results?

Steps

Stakeholders

Current Interest

Potential Interest

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S BUDGET
(or Elders Budget or an Environment Budget)

What's in it?

What can it be used for that would improve results?

Steps

Stakeholders

Current Interest

Potential Interest

COST OF BAD RESULTS REPORT

What's in it?

What can it be used for that would improve results?

Steps

Stakeholders

Current Interest

Potential Interest

Question: How do you help a group identify results for children, families and communities?

Technique

Purpose: Create a list of 10 plain language results.

1. Ask participants to brainstorm endings to the sentences:

We want children who are...
We want families that are...
We want to live in a community that is...

2. Pare the list of answers down to 5 for children, 3 for families, and 2 for the community.

Variations:

We want adults/elders who are...
We want an environment which is...
We want an economy that is...

Practice / Notes

Question: How do you help a group identify the best indicators to represent a result?

Technique

Purpose: Identify indicators to represent a result.

1. Develop a list of how people "experience" the result (e.g. safe children) in their everyday lives
2. Brainstorm a list of how these experiences show up in measurable terms. Make sure each entry is a data statement.
3. Rate each measure on communication proxy and data power as High, Medium or Low. You may need to show ranges (e.g. M-H or actually vote H9, M3, L1)

Practice / Notes

Choosing Indicators

Worksheet

Outcome or Result _____

Candidate Indicators	Communication Power	Proxy Power	Data Power

Question: How do you conduct a turn the curve exercise?

Technique

Purpose: Conduct a "Turn the Curve" exercise for an indicator

1. Break participants into groups of 6.
2. As a large group, brainstorm a list of partners who have a role to play.
3. Give people one or more baselines to turn - OR -
Create a working baseline by charting where we are NOW, and what recent history looks like, and where the line is heading.
4. Follow the timed steps on the next page.
5. After group reports, debrief the process by asking what was different, what was learned from this exercise. Use the answers to reinforce points from the training (e.g. the importance of partners).

Practice / Notes

Turn the Curve Exercise

Population Well-being Indicator(s)

5 min: Starting points

- timekeeper and reporter
- geographic area
- two hats (yours plus partner's)

5 min: Baseline

- pick a curve (or curves) to turn
- forecast - OK or not OK?

15 min: Story behind the baseline

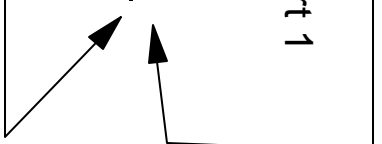
- causes/forces at work _____
- information/research agenda part 1

20 min: What works? (What would it take)

- what works / what doesn't
- each partner's contribution _____
- no cost / low cost ideas
- information/research agenda part 2

5 min: Report

- baseline story
- 3 best ideas (incl one no/low cost)
- off the wall/funniest idea



Question: How do you help a group choose the most powerful what works ideas to put into their action plans?

Technique

Purpose: Use criteria to rate "what works" ideas and select action plan items.

1. In groups of 6, ask each member to personally represent one of the 4 criteria:

Specificity: Is it actionable? (gatekeeper)

Leverage: Will it make a difference?
(intellectual honesty about impact)

Values: Is it consistent with personal/community values?
(conscience)

Reach: Can it be done this year, next year, 3 to 10 yrs? (engineer)

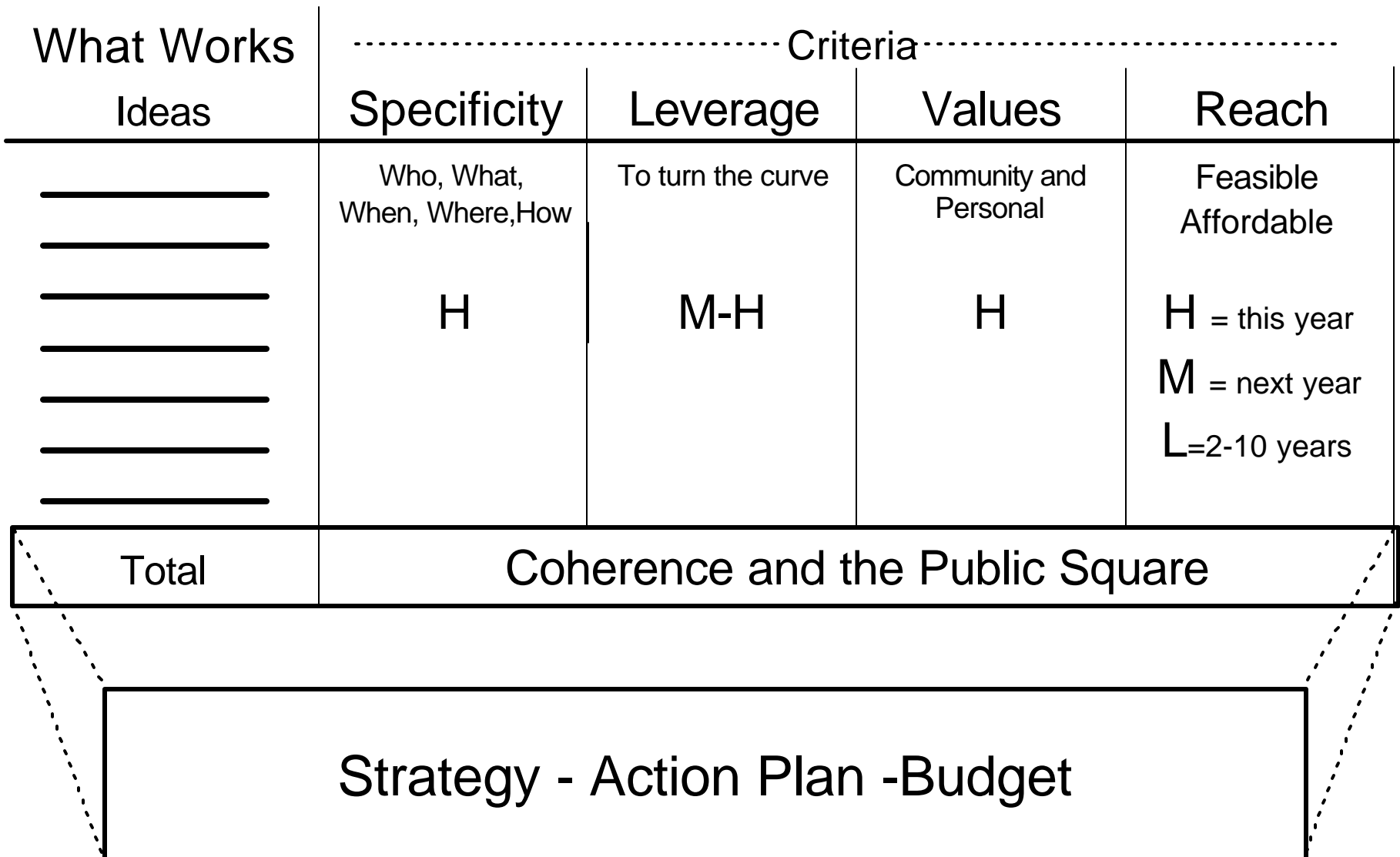
2. The groups rate each what works idea High, Medium or Low on each criteria. See the chart on the next page.

Practice / Notes

From What Works Ideas to a Public Square Strategy

Some Ideas on Sorting Criteria

(Not intended to take the place of hard thinking)



Question: Most of our politicians don't care about long term progress because their terms are limited to two years!

My answer:

Notes:

Question: Shouldn't we wait a few years when we have better data before we start this kind of process?

My answer:

Notes:

Question: How can we make progress without lots of new money?

My answer:

Notes:

Question: How can communities do this without the federal, state and/or county governments leading, or at least supporting, this work?

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

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PART II
PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

This section of the training addresses performance accountability for programs and agencies.

Thinking Process and Tools: Answer each question on the basis of your personal experience. Each answer should start something like: "In my experience, client results are important because..." Use stories anecdotes and examples from your career and your life. And make note of pictures, cartoons or graphics which can help you communicate these ideas to others. Add to your answers from the small group and large group discussion.

Techniques: Practice each decision making technique with the members of your learning group. Take turns leading the work. Make notes of what you learn from this practice.

Tough Questions: Help identify the toughest questions an audience might ask. Then take a crack at your best answer and make notes about other ways to respond from the group discussion.

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
1. Why should we care whether programs and agencies are working well?			
2. What is the difference between effort and effect? What is the difference between quantity and quality?			

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
<p>3. Who are the clients or customers of a service?</p> <p>Why are CLIENT OR CUSTOMER RESULTS the most important measures?</p>			
<p>4. Are there any performance measures over which you have complete control?</p> <p>Why do we have the least control over the most important performance measures?</p>			

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
5. What are the most important reasons to do performance measurement? How could we avoid the use of performance measures for punishment?			
6. How does a performance baseline help compare us to ourselves and set reasonable expectations for progress?			

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
<p>7. Why is it important to have more than one measure for a program?</p> <p>Why is it important to have a small (3 - 5) set of "headline" performance measures for a program?</p>			
<p>8. Why are PARTNERS important to improving service performance? Who are some important partners? Why should we consider parents and clients as partners?</p>			

Question	Answers (reasons)	Stories (anecdotes, examples)	Pictures (overheads, cartoons)
9. Why should we worry about WHAT WORKS and doesn't work for programs? Why should we think about no-cost and low-cost contributions?			
10. Why is it important to go through this thinking process on a regular basis between supervisors and subordinates? What is the value of doing this fast and then ITERATING?			

Performance Accountability

For Programs, Agencies and Service Systems

1. Who are our **customers**, clients, people we serve? (e.g. children in a mentoring program)
2. How can we measure if our clients/customers are better off? (**performance measures about client results** - e.g. rate of high school graduation for mentees)
3. How can we measure if we are delivering service well? (**performance measures about service delivery** - e.g. ratio of mentors to mentees)
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures? Where have we been; where are we headed? (**baselines** and story behind the baselines)
5. Who are the **partners** who have a potential role to play in doing better?
6. **What works**, what could work, to do better than baseline? (best practices, best hunches; incl. partners' contribution)
7. What do we propose to do? (multi-year action plan and budget; incl. no-cost / low-cost items)

MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

What's in it?

What can it be used for that would improve results?

Steps

Stakeholders

Current Interest

Potential Value

Question: How do you help program managers fill out the four quadrants for a program?

Technique

Purpose: Identify performance measures for a program using the four quadrant framework.

1. In the upper left quadrant: ask what activities are performed. Convert each activity into a measure (e.g. # training sessions)List # served by customer type.
2. In the upper right quadrant: review the "standard" measures (e.g. staff ratio, unit cost). Then for each activity ask for a specific measure of its performance (e.g. timeliness, correctness etc.)
3. In the lower two quadrants: Ask how we would know if anyone was better off. Create pairs of measures (# and %) for each answer (e.g. # and % who get jobs). Consider two types of measures: point in time, and improvement over time. If people get stuck, ask the reverse question: if your service were terrible, how would it show up in your clients' lives?

Practice / Notes

Question: How do you help managers select the most important measures for which they have data - and identify a data development agenda?

Technique

Purpose: Winnow down performance measures to headline performance measures.

Quick technique:

1. Identify the measures in the upper and lower right quadrants for which there is good data.
2. Ask: "If you had to talk about your program with one of these measures, which would it be?" If you could have a 2nd, etc...
3. Ask: "If you could buy data for one additional measure what would it be?" A 2nd? A 3rd?

Methodical technique:

1. Rate each measure High, Medium or Low on Communication, Proxy and Data Power. Allow ranges (e.g. M-H or voting H9, M3, L1)
2. Take those that rate highest on all three categories as the best.
3. Take those that are high on communication and proxy, but low on data as the data development agenda.

Practice / Notes

Question: How do you conduct a turn the curve exercise for program performance?

Technique

Purpose: Conduct a "Turn the Curve" exercise for a program

1. Break participants into groups of 6.
2. As a large group, brainstorm a list of partners who have a potential role to play in improving any of the programs open for consideration.
3. Follow the timed steps on the next page.
4. After group reports, debrief the process by asking what was different, what was learned from this exercise. Use the answers to reinforce points from the training (e.g. the importance of partners).

Practice / Notes

Turn the Curve Exercise

Program Performance Measurement

5 min: Starting points

- timekeeper and reporter
- identify a program to work on

5 min: Who's at the table?

- partners who have a role to play
- two hats (yours plus partners)

15 min: Performance measures

- Four quadrants (by yourself, then share)
- choose 1 measure to work on
- create a baseline with forecast

15 min: Story behind the baseline

- causes/forces at work ○—————
- information/research agenda part 1

15 min: What works? ←—————

- what works / what doesn't
- each partner's contribution ○—————
- no cost / low cost ideas
- information/research agenda part 2

5 min: Report

- program, partners and baseline story
- 3 best ideas (incl one no/low cost)
- Off the wall / funniest idea

Question: How is this version of performance measurement different from the many times we've done this before?

My answer:

Notes:

Question: Why should politicians care about the performance of programs?

My answer:

Notes:

Question: How can managers be expected to improve performance without new money?

My answer:

Notes:

Question: Shouldn't we wait a few years until we have better data before starting this kind of process?

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

Question:

My answer:

Notes:

The Language of Accountability

The most common problem in this work is the problem of language. People come to the table from many different disciplines and many different walks of life. And the way in which we talk about programs, services and populations varies, literally, all over the map. This means that the usual state of affairs in planning for children, families, adults, elders and communities is a Tower of Babel, where no one really knows what the other person is saying, but everyone politely pretends that they do. As a consequence, the work is slow, frustrating and often ineffective.

It is possible to exercise language discipline in this work. And the way to do this is to agree on a set of definitions that *start with ideas and not words*. Words are just labels for ideas. And the same idea can have many different labels. The following four ideas are the basis for definitions used at the beginning of this work. Alternative labels are offered:

Results (or outcomes or goals) are conditions of well-being for children, adults, families or communities, stated in plain English (or plain Spanish, or plain Korean...). They are things that voters and taxpayers can understand. They are not about programs or agencies or government jargon. Results include: "healthy children, children ready for school, children succeeding in school, children staying out of trouble, strong families, elders living with dignity in setting they prefer, safe communities, a healthy clean environment, a prosperous economy." (An interesting alternative definition of a result is provided by Con Hogan: "A condition of well-being for people in a place - stated as a complete sentence." This suggests a type of construction for a result statement as "All _ in _ are _." e.g. All babies in Vermont are born healthy.")

Indicators (or benchmarks) are measures which help quantify the achievement of a result. They answer the question "How would we recognize these results in measurable terms if we fell over them?" So, for example, the rate of low-birthweight babies helps quantify whether we're getting healthy births or not. Third grade reading scores help quantify whether children are succeeding in school today, and whether they were ready for school three years ago. The crime rate helps quantify whether we are living in safe communities, etc.

Strategies are coherent collections of actions which have a reasoned chance of improving results. Strategies are made up of our best thinking about what works, and include the contributions of many partners. No single action by any one agency can create the improved results we want and need.

Performance Measures are measures of how well public and private programs and agencies are working. The most important performance measures tell us whether the clients or customers of the service are better off. We sometimes refer to these measures as *client or customer* results (to distinguish them from *cross-community population* results for all children, adults or families)

The principal distinction here is between *ends and means*. Results and indicators are about the ends we want for children and families. And strategies and performance measures are about the means to get there. Processes that fail to make these crucial distinctions often mix up ends and means. And such processes tend

to get mired in the all-talk-no-action circles that have disillusioned countless participants in past efforts. You actually have choices about which labels to use in your work. And clarity about language at the start will help you take your work from talk to action.

What about Mission and Vision, Values, Goals, Objectives, Problems and Issues?

Many of us have grown up with these traditional words in strategic planning and budgeting. Where do they fit?

First, remember that words are just labels for ideas. These seven words have no natural standard definition that bridges across all the different ways they are used. They are terms of art which can and are used to label many different ideas. This is why we pay so much attention to getting language discipline straight at the very beginning. It's the ideas that are important not the words. So you can choose to label the ideas in this guide with any words you like, provided you are consistent.

The word "mission" is usually used in relation to an organization, agency, program, initiative or effort. It is therefore mostly used in connection with agency or program performance accountability. Mission statements are usually concise statements of the purpose of an organization, sometimes also telling why and how the organization does what it does. Mission statements can be useful tools in communicating with internal and external stakeholders. It is possible to construct a mission statement from the performance measurement ideas in the upper right ("How well did we deliver service?") and lower right ("Is anyone better off?") quadrants of the performance measurement framework: For example: "Our mission is to help our clients become self sufficient ("Is anyone better off?" lower right) by providing timely, family friendly, culturally competent job training services ("How well did we deliver service?" upper right)." One mistake that is often made is that organizations spend months and sometimes years trying to craft the perfect mission statement before any other work can proceed. In the FPSI framework, mission statements are set aside, allowing the work of identifying and using performance measures to proceed quickly. Then, on a parallel track a small group can, if it is useful, use the work of the performance measurement groups to craft a workable mission statement.

The word "vision" is often used to convey a picture of a desired future, often one that is hard but possible to attain. This is a powerful idea. And in fact one can think of the set of desired results for children and families as one way of articulating such a vision. "We want our community to be one which is safe and supportive, where all children are healthy and ready for school, where all children succeed in school, and grow up to be productive and contributing adults." This is an example of a vision statement made up of desired results or ends. It is possible to craft such a statement before or after the development of results.

The word "values" in some ways defies definition. It is about what we hold most dear, how we view right and wrong, how we believe we should act, and how those beliefs are, in fact, reflected in our actions. Our values underlie all of the work we do. And that is nowhere more true than in the work on the well-being of children, families and communities. Our values will guide our choice of results for children and families and the decisions we make about how we and our partners take action to improve those results.

The word "goal" is often used interchangeably with "result and outcome" to label the idea of a condition of well-being for children, adults, families or communities (as in the case of Georgia, Missouri and Oregon for example). The word goal has many other common usages as well. It often serves as an all-purpose term to describe a desired accomplishment. "My goal for this month is to fix the roof." "Our goal is to increase citizen participation in the planning process." "The primary goal of the child welfare system is to keep children safe." and so forth. The word goal (or target) is sometimes used to describe the desired future level of achievement for an indicator or performance measure. "Our goal is 95% high school graduation in 5 years." "Our goal is to improve police response time to under 3 minutes." These are widely different usages. Still another use of the word "goal" is in relation to an implementation plan. Given a strategy and action plan to improve a particular result (children ready for school for example), it is possible to structure the action plan as a series of planned accomplishments (goals) with timetables and assigned implementation responsibility. For example, a goal in a "children ready for school plan" might be to "increase funding for child care by 25% this year and 50% next year." This is a specific action which will contribute to achieving the result. There is nothing wrong with any of these usages, provided they are clearly distinguished, used consistently and do not confuse the underlying concepts labeled results, indicators, strategies and performance measures discussed above.

The word "objective" is often paired with the word goal to specify what amount to a series of "subgoals" required to achieve the "higher" goal. The set of terms "mission, goal and objective" have a long history in the military to describe the strategic and tactical components of a large or small action or engagement. And some of their usage in the business sector and the public and private service sector derives from this history. In this framework, the terms goal and objective are most often used to structure the action plan and specify who will do what, how, and by when.

The words "problem" and "issue" are used in more ways than just about any planning term. They can be used to describe almost anything. "The problem with this computer is that the keyboard is too small." "The problem with our community is that there is not a safe place for children to play." "We must solve the issue of affordability if we are to provide child care for all who need it." These are three different uses of the words and there are countless others. Again, there is nothing wrong with any of these usages, provided that they do not interfere with the language discipline discussed above about ends and means.