



The New Federal Performance System

Implementing the GPRA Modernization Act



Key Recommendations

1. *Connect the Performance System to Public Service Motivation*
2. Build a Learning Culture
3. Balance Top-Down Targets with Bottom-Up Innovations
4. Integrate Program Evaluation into the Performance Management System
5. Ensure Leaders are Committed to Performance Management
6. Connect with Congress and Stakeholders

What is Public Service Motivation?

Public service motivation was defined as “an individual’s orientation to delivering services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society” It draws from the altruistic desire to help others. Research has associated public service motivation with lower turnover, higher job satisfaction, and work commitment.

Connect the Performance System to Public Service Motivation

- Select goals that motivate
- Make goals the glue to hold networks together
- Connect to beneficiaries
- Create a clear line of sight between actions and goals
- Celebrate achievement
- Align employee recognition systems

Select goals that motivate

- Every organizational goal chosen represents an opportunity to make a connection to public service motivation. Where possible, agencies should select goals that clearly communicate the ultimate value and importance of public service in making a difference in people's lives.

Connect to beneficiaries

- Providing employees with direct evidence of the value of their efforts, through feedback or meeting with beneficiaries, increases performance

Create a clear line of sight between actions and goals

- Clearer goals are associated with stronger attraction to mission and higher use of performance data. For employees, part of goal clarity is understanding how actions connect to goals, i.e., an understanding of how their actions contributed to a broader and important goal.
- Having a clear line of sight means that employees asked to undertake a particular task should be reminded how it contributes to a broader motivational goal.

Celebrate achievement

- Celebration of achievement represents a positive feedback loop that reinforces the sense that public work is generating a valuable outcome. It also reduces the possibility that employees come to view performance systems purely as punitive mechanisms that only convey negative messages of failure.

Align employee recognition systems

- Performance appraisal and recognition systems should be aligned to the motivational power of clear goals, are linked to results for program beneficiaries, and recognize achievement.

How should performance be measured?

- Federal work is multidimensional, done in teams, and subject to multiple supervisors and multiple objectives.
- Many performance appraisal systems share two attributes: They absorb vast amounts of management time and resources, and they make everybody unhappy.
- Using team or group-based performance metrics which are linked to public service motivation and which reward accomplishments is a good way to achieve desired outcomes.