



# RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

## WHAT IS RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY?

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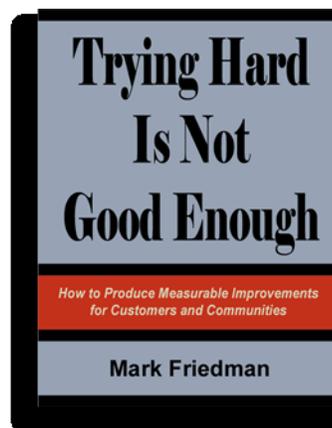
Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA), also known as Outcomes-Based Accountability™ (OBA), is a disciplined way of thinking and taking action that states, municipalities and organizations can use to improve the lives of children, youth, families, adults, customers and, the community or organization, as a whole. RBA is directed at organizations who want to improve the performance of their programs or services. RBA was developed by Mark Friedman and described in his book, *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough*, FPSI Publishing [See: <http://resultsaccountability.com/>].

**Results-Based Accountability is made up of two parts:**  
**1) Population-Level Ac-**

**countability; and**  
**2) Performance Account-**  
**ability.**

**Population Accountability** – is about the well-being of whole populations whether they are receiving services or not, such as all Vermonters, Chittenden County residents, youths 13 – 19 years, people with disabilities, hunters, students, etc.

**Performance Accountabil-**  
**ity** – is about the well-being of the clients served, programs run, or activities performed by the agencies, service systems or units of government. The use of a common language is critical to understanding RBA. The basic terms include: Outcome/Result; Indicator/Benchmark; strategy; and performance measure.



During the 2014 legislative session, Act 186 was passed with the intention of implementing a framework of Results-Based Accountability in Vermont State government, while allowing for other performance models such as Lean.

Link to 2014 Act 186:  
<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/>

## WHY DO WE WANT TO USE RBA?

Government has always been good at reporting on quantity: caseloads, customers, dollars, units, revenue, costs, positions, appropriations, etc. But, we have not always been very good about reporting on the results actually achieved by the programs and activity we engage in. And, aren't the results what we really want to know about? What did we get for our investment? Did we achieve the goals of the pro-

gram? Have we changed someone's life circumstances or behavior? And finally, **is anyone better off?** If we are not able to determine that our efforts achieve real results, then we must ask ourselves if we should be doing "this or that" particular program/activity differently, or at all.

RBA, at its best, encourages collaboration among those decision-makers and partici-

pants who set the Outcomes, deliver the services, report and monitor the results and receive the services. RBA encourages Legislators, agencies/departments, program and planning staff, providers and community members to come to consensus on achievable results and to manage services to achieve those results. ▲

***Outcome/Result:*** a condition of well-being for children, adults, families, and communities. "Outcome" is generally used at the population level. When delving down to the department or program level, "result or goal" may be substituted.<sup>1</sup>

**Indicator/  
Benchmark:**

*a measure that helps quantify the achievement of an outcome/ results/goal.<sup>1</sup>*

## POPULATION-LEVEL ACCOUNTABILITY

2014 Act 186 *Population Level Outcomes and Indicators*, set in statute 8 basic Population level Outcomes and 5 sub-Outcomes. Signed into law by Governor Shumlin, on June 11, 2014, these Outcomes state the highest level conditions we, as a state government, always work to achieve for our citizenry. They include:

1. Vermont has a prosperous economy.
2. Vermonters are healthy.
3. Vermont's environment is clean and sustainable.
4. Vermont's communities are safe and supportive.

5. Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported.
6. Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including:
  - 6A. Pregnant women and young people thrive.
  - 6B. Children are ready for school.
  - 6C. Children succeed in school.
  - 6D. Youths choose healthy behaviors.
  - 6E. Youths successfully transition to adulthood.
7. Vermont's elders and people with disabilities and people with mental

conditions live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer.

8. Vermont has open, effective, and inclusive government at the State and local levels.



## POPULATION-LEVEL INDICATORS

Act 186 set initial Population-Level Indicators tied to each Outcome. However, the Act does not mandate these indicators and allows a process by which agencies/departments may suggest changes, additions or eliminations of indicators annually with the concurrence of the appropriate subject matter Committee of Jurisdiction and the Government Accountability Committee.

For example, one of the initial Act 186 indicators was "% CO<sup>2</sup> emissions per capita" - the Department of Public Service suggests a proxy indicator "% Green house gas (GHG) emissions per capita" because GHG is a broader and more inclusive measure

of which approximately 85% is CO<sup>2</sup>. Current population-level indicators may be found at: [http://spotlight.vermont.gov/sites/finance\\_transparency/files/PerformanceMeasures/CurrentIndicatorsList.xls](http://spotlight.vermont.gov/sites/finance_transparency/files/PerformanceMeasures/CurrentIndicatorsList.xls)

Indicators are measures which help quantify the achievement of an Outcome, such as recidivism rate, violent crime rate, median household income, high school graduation rate, or unemployment rate. By reporting programmatic performance measures which inform the indicators, we have more information on the actual result achieved by the programs/activities.

For example, look at the indi-

cator: % of adults who smoke cigarettes. If the state smoking cessation 802Quits program asks the providers of cessation services to report specific performance measures, such as: 1) How many attendees completed the course? 2) How many of your trainers are certified? And, 3) "How many attendees were quit at the end of the course?" - we will begin to see which individual programs results and will, over time be able to project trends. We will also be able to delve into the Story Behind the Curve (baseline/trend) and discover new ways to assist and ways to cross-populate successful ideas and practices across all 802Quits programs.

## PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

Performance Accountability uses Performance Measures to determine the achievement of results for programs and activities. There are three types of Performance Measures: **1) How much did we do?; 2) How well did we do it?; and 3) Is anyone better off?** [continued top next page]

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE: HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

This type of quantity performance measures tells us how much service we delivered, how many customers were served, the number of activities performed, and/or other quantitative metrics.

Historically, the State is very good at reporting quantities. However, quantities do not, in

themselves, tell us if the service delivered actually achieved the expected results.

This is why, of the three types of performance measure, this one is deemed the least important, but the one which is the easiest for us to report on and control.

This type of measure does inform us about growth in the service demands and the utilization by clients we serve.

The challenge for decision makers is whether a quantity increase alone justifies increases in resources and/or funding when the existing results are not meeting the anticipated results.

### Performance Measure:

*a measure of how well a program, agency, department, or division is working. There are three types of performance measures, the most important of these are #3 and #2, respectively:*

- 1) "How much did we do" (effort/ quantity);
- 2) "How well did we do it" (effort/ quality); and
- 3) "Is anyone better off" (effect/ quantity/ quality).<sup>1</sup>

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE: HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

This type of performance measure tells us about the quality of the service delivered or activity engaged in.

Quality is reported in terms of

timeliness, staffing ratios, staff training or certifications, compliance with standards, unit costs, etc.

Quality performance

measures are very important and help us ascertain the fact that we are delivering the best service that it is possible to deliver.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE: IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

This final type of performance measure is the most important but, the hardest to collect and control. Ultimately, this is the performance measure we should target as evidence that our state programs, services and activities are, in fact, achieving the desired results for the clients and taxpayers.

If services, directed at, for

example, reducing the teen pregnancy rate, are not reducing the incidents of teen pregnancy, then what is the purpose of the service? Performance measures allow the decision makers to delve into the programs and services that are supposed to be mitigating this rate and look for ways to improve the effectiveness of the service, make changes to address new con-

ditions or evaluate why different results are seen in different program and/or regions.

With everyone collaborating on ways to improve services and/or delivery, and measuring the effectiveness of programs and services, we will be able to make data-driven decision, rather than perpetuating services that are not actually having the desired effect.

## PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY & THE BUDGET

2014 Act 186 called for the expansion of the FY 2015 Programmatic Performance Measure Budget Pilot program, where performance measures are reported in the Vantage statewide budget system, and tied to the related appropriation amount. For FY 2015, 13 program across 11 departments were presented with the FY 2015 Governor's Budget Recommendations. After several months of RBA training for Executive Branch staff, more than 30 programs/departments are targeted to participate for FY 2016. This program will continue to roll-out to all Executive Branch units under the direction of Susan Zeller, State Chief Performance Officer, within the Agency of Administration. Sue may be reached at: [Susan.zeller@state.vt.us](mailto:Susan.zeller@state.vt.us).

## Tools, Techniques & Training

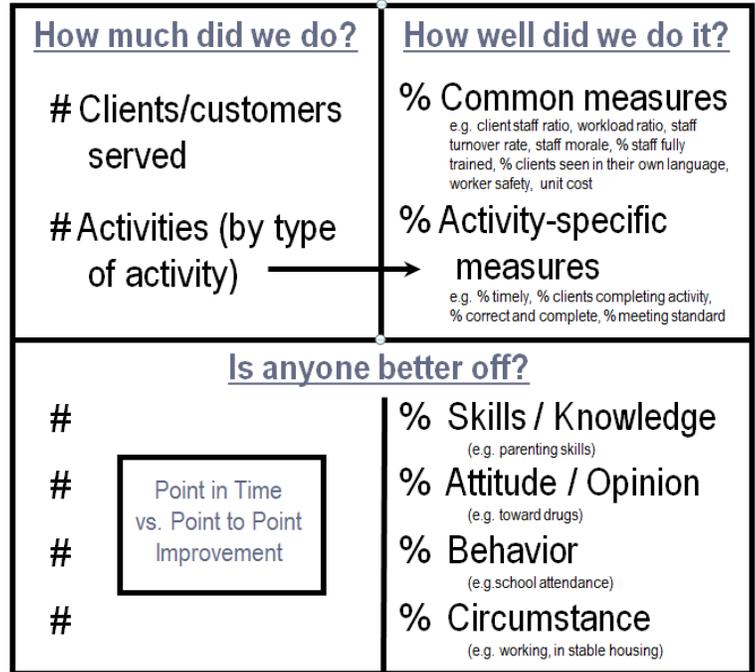
### Legislative Training:

We need something here about training....

Times, dates, who will arrange—who can they call????

## THE RBA QUADRANT GRID

*The RBA “quadrant grid” is a point-in-time way to organize the three types of performance measures:*



### Sponsors and Links:

▲ The Government Accountability Committee, Sen. Diane Snelling and Rep. Anne O'Brien, Co-Chairs.

▲ The House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Rep. Mitzi Johnson and Sen. Jane Kitchel, Chairs, respectively.

▲ The Vermont Agency of Administration, Susan Zeller, Chief Performance Officer.

[http://spotlight.vermont.gov/performance\\_measures](http://spotlight.vermont.gov/performance_measures)

▲ Benchmarks for a Better Vermont, Marlboro College Graduate & Professional Studies: <http://www.bbvt.marlboro.edu/>

Footnote: 1. RBA was developed by Mark Friedman and described in his book *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough*, FPSI Publishing [See: <http://resultsaccountability.com/>]

## TURN THE CURVE EXERCISE

When desired results are not being achieved, a “Turn the Curve Exercise” is a collaborative technique that allows interested groups to discuss and understand where the trend in the baseline data is going, if things continue as they are.

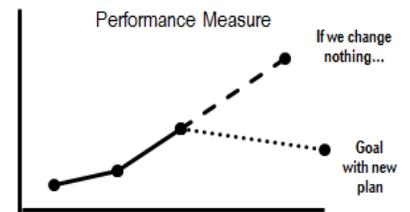
The group then runs through a list of questions designed to enhance understanding of the challenge and illicit new and often simple ideas that may be put in place, often for little or no cost.

Up to three “best ideas” which are believed to be able to mitigate and/or improve results are planned and executed. These new ideas are tracked over time and performance measures should show mitigation or improvement if they work as expected.

### ONE PAGE Turn the Curve Exercise

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Measure  
Baseline



Story behind the baseline

-----  
----- (List as many as needed)

Partners

-----  
----- (List as many as needed)

Three Best Ideas – What Works

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----No-cost / low-cost
4. ----- Off the Wall