

# Evaluation's Role in Public Management: King County's experience in increasing the role of information

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**King County**

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- Framework concept & ideas
- Changing expectations for the public sector
- Public sector responses
- King County experiences

	<b>Elected Official</b>	<b>Bureaucratic Manager</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Ideology</b>	Political, economic or otherwise	“Program theory” The way we’ve always done it	Can provide a useful framework	Can serve to limit openness to other approaches
<b>Intuition</b>	Intuition is an essential skill for political success	Intuition is used but is generally considered over-rated	Integrates multiple experiences (ala Malcolm Gladwell’s <u>Blink</u> ) Can help “read between the lines”	Intuition can be wrong Can mean ignoring overwhelming evidence
<b>Interests</b>	Narrow interests vs. the common interest	Organizational interests vs. the common interest	Can focus on the broadest benefit or the common interest	Can focus on narrow, parochial, special, or organizational interests
<b>Info.</b>	Nice to have, but not always available in time-bound decisions or essential for decision-making	Essential, will often delay decision making until “sufficient” information is obtained	Can challenge the status quo Can improve decisions Can improve management Can improve results	Can serve to postpone decision making Can make ill-informed decisions based on lack of data or impartial/erroneous data

# Changing Expectations for the Public Sector

- Shift in the public sector towards **results** (outputs not good enough)
- Increased formalization: GPRA, PART, state and local requirements
- Even accountants and financial community getting in on the act
- Public expectations increasing for transparency, accountability
- Parallels in private sector (Sarbanes-Oxley, Balanced Scorecard, Baldrige)
- Structural financial issues (costs vs. revenues) forcing more acute trade-offs

# Public Sector Responses

1. Increased visibility for more active internal management (use info)
2. Making “assumed” program theory more explicit (use *better* info)
3. Linking measures with the budget/funding (use info)
4. Public reporting of results (share info)

## ■ Growth of “Performance Stat” programs



# Responses - Making “assumed” program theory more explicit

- Strategic planning & performance reports
- Use of logic models as a common tool
- King County used logic models to develop our measurement framework
  - Logic models used to connect outputs, program outcomes, and community results
  - Teaching logic models in curricula
  - Common framework and base of understanding

# Responses - Linking measures with the budget/funding

- *Idea* is to use performance information to inform budget decisions
- Appears to be the hardest element to master
- King County just developed a Program Assessment form for budget development
  - Program description, legal mandate, performance data, interdepartmental collaboration, evaluation of changes and potential impacts
  - More information to consider when weighing trade-offs as part of budget decision-making process

# Responses - Public reporting of results

- Numerous jurisdictions reporting results
- National guidelines for state and local performance reporting
  - Government Accounting Standards Board
  - Association of Government Accountants
- King County doing public reporting & meeting national guidelines
  - Reporting community indicators & program results
  - 4-page dashboard and in-depth website ([www.metrokc.gov/aimshigh](http://www.metrokc.gov/aimshigh))

# Why are *you* doing evaluation & performance management?

