

Bob

Behn's Performance Leadership Report

An occasional (and maybe even insightful) examination of the issues, dilemmas, challenges, and opportunities for improving performance and producing real results in public agencies.



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On how performance-focused cities are moving up to

PerformanceStat 3.0 (or CollaborationStat)

In 2000, when Baltimore's Mayor Martin O'Malley launched **CitiStat**, he focused on getting city agencies to simply do their core jobs.

CitiStat was the first effort to adapt the CompStat leadership strategy, created by the New York City Police Department, to a jurisdiction. To learn how to make their adaptation work, O'Malley's leadership team had to focus on the basics. Thus, they upgraded the city's 311 phone system so, when citizens called, their service request would be entered into a database and automatically sent to the responsible agency. Moreover, it set specific performance targets for each service request.

The city's classic target was **the 48-hour pothole guarantee**. When citizens called 311 to request that a pothole be filled, they were told that it would be filled within 48 hours. But O'Malley's leadership team did more than set such targets. They also monitored and motivated city employees to ensure that these targets were met.

As a result, city employees did, indeed, fill the potholes—and fill them quickly. And citizens noticed: Calling city hall actually produced the desired result. Thus, **the number of pothole calls to 311 jumped significantly**.

A few years later, when Joseph Curtatone was elected mayor of Somerville, Massachusetts, he quickly took his leadership team to visit Baltimore and CitiStat. Soon, Curtatone had his **SomerStat**—plus a 311 number for “One Call to City Hall”—up and running. Curtatone too focused first on delivering basic city services.

In 2004, Baltimore won one of the Kennedy School's awards for **Innovation in American Government**. In 2006, a writer in *The Boston Globe* described Somerville as “**chockablock with cutting-edge ideas**” and the state's “**best-run city**.”

Yet others have complained: What's the big deal? So they can fill potholes. Weren't they always supposed to do that? If a city was really

innovative, it would invent something to eliminate the need to ever again fill potholes.

Perhaps. But isn't that what the private sector is supposed to be good at? Mayors of rust-belt municipalities would rush to buy a magic elixir that would banish potholes forever.

Meanwhile, mayors who used a **PerformanceStat** approach to fix basic service delivery—to fill potholes, trim trees, and eradicate graffiti—have expanded their use of the strategy.

In Baltimore the other week, the CitiStat meeting wasn't about potholes. Instead it was all about Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's **Vacants to Value (V2V)** effort to clean up and redevelop vacant and abandoned buildings to increase property values and attract businesses and residents.

Rawlings-Blake is the third mayor to employ CitiStat to manage Balti-

When seeking to create a PerformanceStat leadership strategy, public organizations begin by improving operations. As they learn, they redesign core activities. Eventually, they focus on outcomes, which requires them to develop CollaborationStat.

more and achieve her key objectives. But her V2V effort requires more than getting city agencies and employees to do their core tasks promptly. That's why the CitiStat room was overflowing with fifty managers from five departments—Housing; Transportation; Planning; Recreation and Parks; Police—plus the Bureau of Solid Waste. Each has responsibilities for the V2V initiative that require them to collaborate with others.

Only four days later in Somerville—at a meeting on Youth SystemStat, the story was similar. The discussion focused on the various public and civil-society systems that “shape outcomes relating to children and

youth.” One such outcome: “Young people succeed throughout their academic career and graduate high school prepared to succeed in life.”

Both Baltimore and Somerville have advanced from PerformanceStat 1.0, to PerformanceStat 2.0, and now to PerformanceStat 3.0.

PerformanceStat 1.0 is about creating operational effectiveness. It requires managers and employees—with prodding from the organization's leadership team—to do the basic tasks in a timely and proper way. It is about production: getting the core outputs done and on time.

PerformanceStat 2.0 is about redesigning the existing core functions. It requires managers and employees—with prodding and guidance from the organization's leadership team—to rethink how they go about their core functions. It is about identifying new, innovative ways to produce the existing, well established outputs.

PerformanceStat 3.0 focuses on outcomes. It requires the managers and employees of *multiple* agencies—with the prodding, guidance, and active analytical engagement of the leadership team—to figure out who needs to collaborate with whom to produce the desired outcomes. It is about assigning priorities to outcomes and then motivating everyone to figure out how best to achieve them.

When governmental jurisdictions and public agencies graduate from PerformanceStat 1.0, to 2.0, and then to 3.0, they move from ProductionStat, to OutputStat to CollaborationStat. But before they can make such collaboration work, they have to learn to fix the potholes. **B**

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