

# The Marketing of a Public Program

Transforming Your Career in  
Pursuit of a Stronger Nation



Alan Minton • David Ehrlich

# The Marketing of a Public Program

*Transforming Your Career  
in Pursuit of a Stronger Nation*

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**Dave Ehrlich**

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Front Image: Rosie the Riveter, We Can Do It!  
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## Dedication

To our federal government clients and  
students of Marketing Public Programs:  
Your work is important and your pursuit  
for a stronger nation is courageous.  
Stay resolved.

To the Graduate School in Washington, DC:  
Thank you for making Marketing Public Programs  
accessible nationally to the federal government.

To my children  
Nicholas, Allyse and Ryan:  
Upon each day, I hope you find your passion  
in pursuit of a meaningful life.  
Stay resolved

Alan Minton

## Acknowledgements

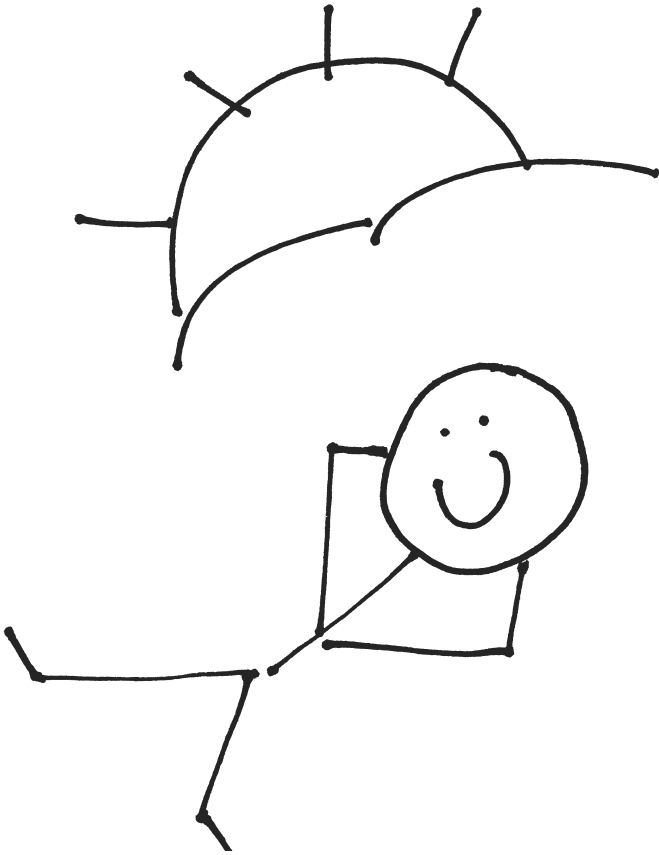
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Bob Zachariasiewicz

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# THE END

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Upon Retirement...

Imagine strolling the streets of a small town impacted by your public program.

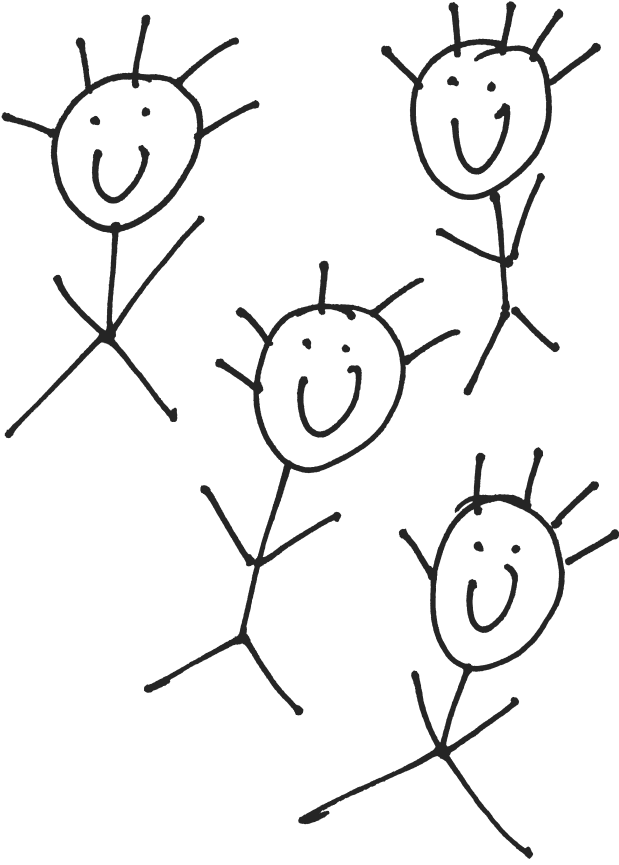
Sharing time with the locals. Enjoying conversations and learning about their hopes and dreams. Clean environment, effective schools, safe neighborhoods, healthy homes, thriving economy.

Delighting in the realization of dreams as you watch happy children laughing and playing.

And these are just a few things that resulted from your career in public service.

This is clearly the beginning of something powerful.

That is what your career is all about: Transforming public programs in pursuit of a stronger nation.



# A PUBLIC PROGRAM – PURPOSE IN PROCESS

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Like it or not, this we have been given: a public program.

What is the purpose of a public program?

It is helpful to consider why we create public programs in the first place. A public program is created to connect people with benefits. Therefore, its purpose is to maximize its potential to connect people with benefits in pursuit of outcomes.

If a program has benefits, we can refer to the people receiving the benefits as beneficiaries.

From a program perspective, who is a beneficiary?

A beneficiary is anyone in the program chain to distribute and/or receive the benefit. When a program relies on someone outside itself to distribute its benefits, it is helpful to view them as beneficiaries, too. Some people use the term “stakeholder” to describe program beneficiaries.

A public program is always in process. Moved by the forces that shape it. Balancing the interests of those it serves – its beneficiaries and those who run it – the adults within the program.

How might we intelligently provide the most relevant benefits to satisfy distinct needs, and, at the same time, strengthen our program?

If we look to the private sector as a metaphor for achieving outcomes, we see growth and contraction within a rigorous voluntary environment – the commercial marketplace. Upon examination, we begin to uncover powerful lessons that align with our public program’s true purpose – connecting people with benefits.

Indeed, the power of this approach is that it likely does not require additional resources – financial or human. It offers a new way to perceive and approach our program’s stakeholders, most notably, our beneficiaries.

From this new perspective, a program is on a path to maximize its truest potential to connect people with benefits in pursuit of outcomes.

## MARY'S STORY

---



***“[W]hat I’ve come to realize is there is no substitute for planned strategy and systems, the casting of the team, the development of the team, there is no magic wand. There is no one person, one player who will change everything.”<sup>1</sup>***

*Ted Leonsis, Chairman and Owner, Washington Capitals,  
Washington Mystics and Lincoln Holdings, LLC*

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1. Carpenter, Les. “Taking ownership of the Washington Wizards is just the latest reckoning for Ted Leonsis.” *The Washington Post* April 28, 2010; A01. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/27/AR2010042705178\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/27/AR2010042705178_pf.html)

Working within a large federal agency, Mary is the designated go-to person for outreach on a visible public program. When she took the position two years ago, she saw the move as a chance to advocate for a cause near and dear to her heart: She'd be advancing her career and using her professional skills to give something back to the community, the proverbial "win-win" in her mind.

Looking back, Mary wonders if her efforts contributed anything to the community. Her career seems to have taken two steps back instead of one step forward. In fact, she has become disillusioned with the very program that held so much promise to serve an at-risk population she cared for so deeply.

So far, none of Mary's work has produced the "holy grail" of a public program – outcomes.

"How do I, as a communication and outreach person, produce outcomes with the talents for which I was hired for by the program?" Mary wonders.

For two years, this question punishes Mary as the program “battle cry” for innovation grows louder and louder. Over time, Mary begins to develop concerns for her own survival. Saving the at-risk community becomes lost in the paranoia over her own professional abilities and instincts.

Mary suffers from a delusion about her role in communication and outreach relative to the program. Both parties strengthen this delusion.



## *The Outcome Delusion*

---

Holding Mary responsible for program outcomes is no different than expecting the IT department to reduce childhood obesity, or holding HR accountable for increasing seatbelt compliance in the United States.

How can we not expect public program communication and outreach professionals to do their job producing program outcomes?

This is the outcome delusion that is the source of so much pain for Mary and the program.

# The System Model

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It is helpful to consider the foundation of a government program. Simply, a program is a set of independent but interacting parts working together to produce performance or outcomes.

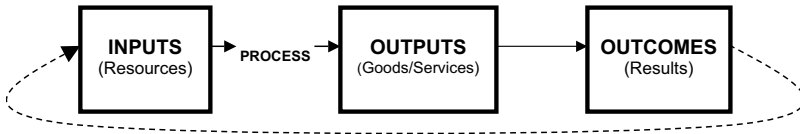


Figure 1: System Diagram with Feedback Loop

*Systems thinking is the process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole."*

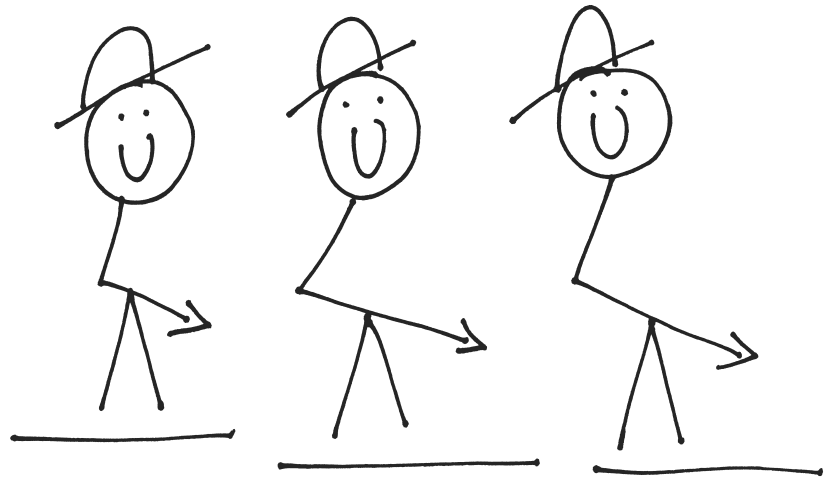
To achieve outcomes, a system optimizes its resources (inputs) in the production of goods and services (outputs).

In the commercial sector, a business optimizes its resources (inputs) toward the production of goods and services (outputs) in pursuit of profit (outcomes). The feedback loop provides vital information for the business to refine its performance.

Indeed, executive management is rightfully held accountable for outcomes (profit). Accountability requires responsibility and authority to optimize resources (inputs) towards the production of goods and services (outputs).

Accountability = Responsibility + Authority

# Inputs at work



## *Inputs and Outputs*

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HR (input) works to hire, train and retain talented people (output). Contracts (input) works to implement contractual documents and procedures (output). Legal (input) works to protect the organization with lawful products and services (output). The advertising department (input) works to develop and implement messaging platforms such as branding, websites and promotional collateral materials (output). And, at any point in a system, practical performance measures can be established to strengthen the feedback loop.

*Programs deliver outcomes, but projects deliver outputs.*

In a system, any one input and its respective output contributes to outcomes rather than directly delivering the outcome itself.

From a system perspective, Nike advertising contributes to profit outcome no differently than any other input and output of the company contributes to profit. Nike advertising is not directly accountable for profit because this outcome is dependent upon a complex system of inputs and outputs controlled by executive management.

## *Communications and Outreach's Role in the System*

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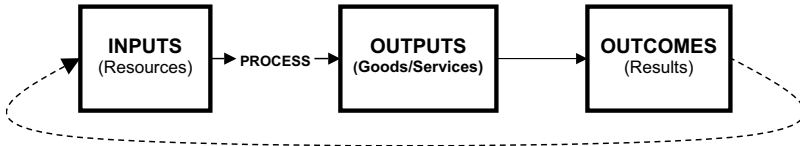


Figure 2: System Diagram with Feedback Loop

From a system perspective, communication and outreach professionals supporting a public program contribute to performance outcome no differently than any other input and output that contributes to program performance. Communication and outreach is not directly accountable for program performance because outcomes are dependent upon a complex system of inputs and outputs controlled by program management.

## *The Outcome Delusion Exposed*

---

Mary finally recognizes for the first time that her role in a programmatic system is that of an input producing outputs, rather than outcomes. Her responsibility is to implement messaging platforms such as websites, email newsletters, conferences and grassroots partnerships to inform, promote, inspire and motivate the at-risk population her program seeks to help. Program management is accountable with the authority and responsibility to deliver upon program outcomes, not Mary.

*Mary's job is to ensure that her projects are delivered on time, to budget and to specification.*

From a program perspective, Mary begins to understand that her role in this system is no different than any other program input such as HR, contracts or legal. The primary responsibility of a program input is to produce program outputs.

With this new insight, Mary ponders a troubling question that puts into doubt the foundation of her profession.

“Why was this outcome delusion unique to her discipline of communications and outreach? Why didn’t HR or IT also get handed the responsibility of producing program outcomes?”

Because all of the other inputs (HR, IT, public affairs, legal, contracts, etc.) have historical, professional foundations which established boundaries.

*In the pursuit of outcomes, a program is born to exploit economies of scale and to reduce coordination costs and risks.*

The HR function grounds itself in professional models defining its scope of work and competencies. Same goes for IT and most inputs. This professional grounding is communicated on a daily basis to the program, which in turn respects this boundary. This grounding keeps these functions secure in the knowledge that their role is to produce outputs, not outcomes. They don't control all necessary system inputs and outputs.

Without a strong disciplinary grounding, public program communication and outreach professionals seek paths beyond their output boundaries. Along with a complicit program, the outcome delusion begins. And so does the suffering.





## *Beyond the Delusion, a New Frontier*

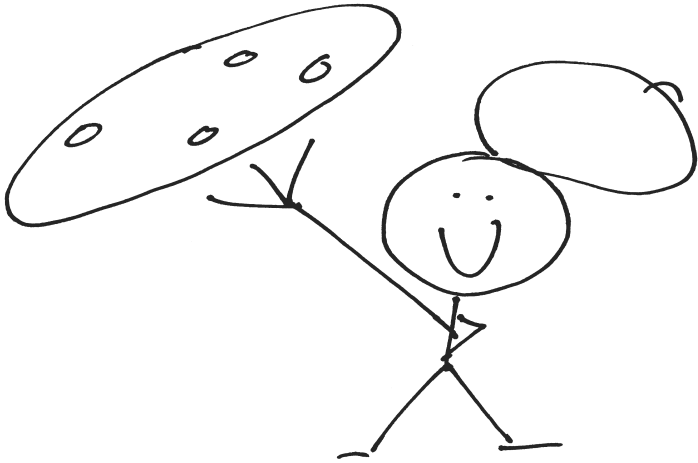
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Mary is confident that she can deliver her outputs and establish meaningful performance measures to ensure her success. She can set professional boundaries for her position. She can communicate and demonstrate her practical expertise relative to the needs of the program - but Mary is still captivated by the thought of her work contributing to outcomes and directly impacting her at-risk population.

In a system, the outcome game is very different than the output game. It requires different perspectives and skill sets beyond the traditional role of input working to produce outputs.

The outcome producer, typically program management, is grounded in a professional discipline that establishes engagement rules, and weaves inputs and outputs together into an outcome-producing whole.

Mary is intrigued. How might she elevate her position to a new level of program support to directly impact outcomes?



# A PIZZA PROGRAM

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Gheppetto's grandfather started the family pizza business in 1903, serving a delightful pizza with a combination of secret spices brought from the old country more than a century ago.

Standing in the doorway of the shop which also serves as his home, a middle-aged but still energetic Gheppetto gazes proudly across the town square — contemplating his role in carrying on the family tradition, providing for his family and serving as the town's unofficial goodwill ambassador. Through hard work and a tiny bit of luck, Gheppetto is indeed living the American dream.

Across town, Biff Wellington is back home after just completing his college education in business. Throughout his youth, Biff was a painful example of childhood disdain and contempt.

Standing in his doorway, Biff seethes with ambition. No longer satisfied by focusing his energies on his family, Biff begins to set his sights on a business world that works for him. Biffs' American dream is very different than Gheppetto's, but hits close to home for the local pizza champion.

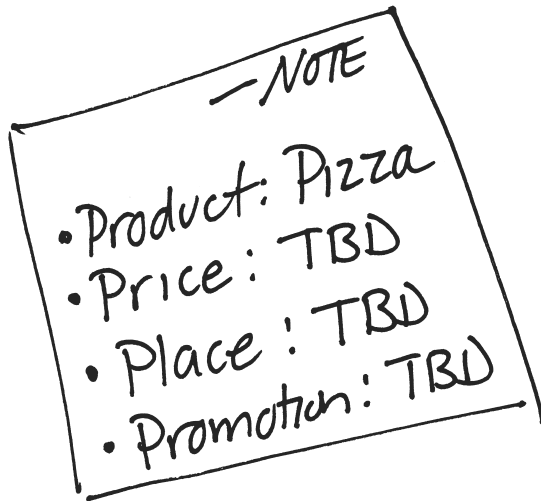
In school, Biff was fascinated to learn that a business structures itself around a mix of only four controllable variables referred to as the 4Ps.

- Product
- Price
- Place (Distribution)
- Promotion

The goal is to make decisions that center the 4Ps on the targeted customers to drive demand and, ultimately, maximize profit. A market-driven business is defined as organizing itself in this manner. To the contrary, a product-driven business organizes its decisions and resources around the product.

After four years of college, Biff is certain about two things: He likes pizza and he wants to make a lot of money. Actually, he knows something else. He doesn't much care for Gheppetto, who threw him out of his pizza shop long ago for a youthful indiscretion. To make matters worse, Gheppetto is cocky, according to Biff. Biff smiles as he thinks to himself, "takes one to know one I guess."

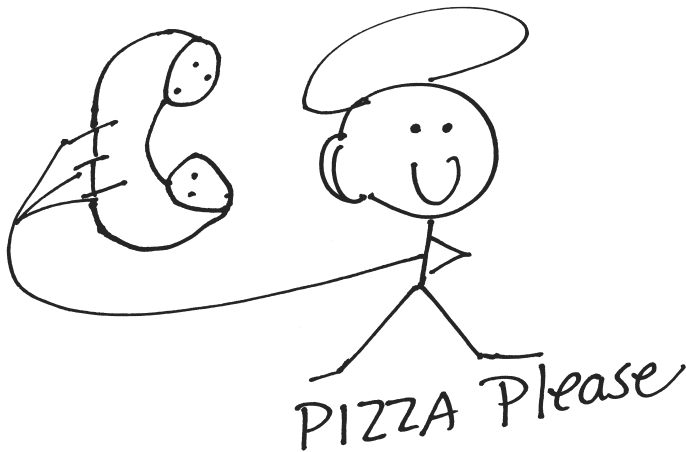
Biff announces to himself that he will start a pizza business in his hometown. Biff writes on a piece of paper the following note:



Although raised with plenty of family money, Biff has been cut off from any financial help for reasons he can't understand. But his parents claim it has something to do with his past behavior.

Undeterred, Biff recalls the words of a college professor who constantly reminded the class that something could be accomplished at any resource level. Biff does have plenty of energy and time, although he would like more money.

Inspired, Biff decides to study his competition and research his market to make startup business decisions that center his 4Ps around his prospective customers.



Acting as a secret shopper, Biff calls Gheppeto's on a Friday night to order a pizza. A gruff man in a hurried voice shouts into the phone, "Gheppeto's!"

"Yes, I would like to place a pick-up order for three large pizzas, one cheese and two pepperoni."

The man yells back into the phone, "Call back in an hour," slamming the phone in Biff's ear.

Intrigued, Biff gets in his car and drives to Gheppeto's to see if he might have more luck by eating in. The line is out the door and not moving. Biff looks inside the shop to see that each of the 20 seats is full. He asks those standing in line why they are waiting, and to his shock and horror, he hears, "Gheppeto's makes the best pizza within 200 miles. We'd rather wait than drive anywhere else."

Humbled, Biff returns home. He knows that his pizza could never be better than Gheppeto's. Indeed, those secret spices even taste great to him. Adding insult to injury, Gheppeto not only owns the best location in town, but he enjoys an unmatched economy of scale by living over the shop. Combined with name recognition and a town that loves him, Gheppeto's is quite the competitor. Great pizza, great price, great location no doubt!

Over the next several weeks, Biff thinks through his start-up approach relative to the 4Ps and his resources. Early one morning, bleary-eyed and frustrated, Biff comes up with a plan and writes the following note to himself:

— NOTE

<u>Gheppeto</u>	<u>Biff</u>
Product: G-Pizza	B-Pizza
PRICE: \$5/pie	\$7.50/pie
Place: Gheppeto	Delivery
Promotion: Secret Spices	30 minutes or less
- Ask Dad to borrow car.	
- Ask Mom to use kitchen.	

Biff's plan to produce a lower quality (B-Pizza) and actually charge more seems suicidal at best.

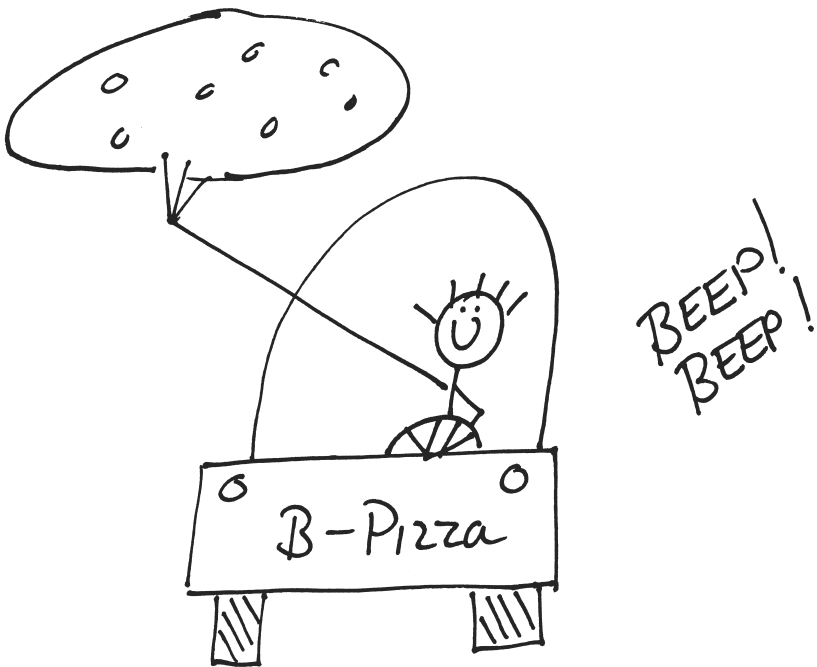
Gheppeto is in the pizza business. But Biff is in the outcome business – the “making-money” outcome business. From Biff's perspective, the pizza is just an output, a product of Gheppeto's work, his input.

Upon reflection, Biff sees that Gheppeto's outcome potential (his profit) is impacted by a product focus, his own history and his self-imposed limitations about his possibilities. Great pizza, 20 seats, downtown. By studying his competitor, Biff realizes that Gheppeto's is product-driven vs. market driven.

At first glance, it appears that Biff has fewer resources and possibilities relative to Gheppeto. But behold the power of innovation in pursuit of outcomes regardless of inputs and outputs.

Biff's pizza business is market-driven, not product-driven. His model adjusts its controllable variables (4Ps) around its market in pursuit of maximizing its potential, its outcome, its performance and, in the case of business, its profit.

And now you know the rest of the story.





# THE JOY OF SIX: A “BENEFICIARY-DRIVEN™” PROGRAM MODEL

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How often over the last 10 years have you heard, “Your program should think more like the private sector to fulfill its mission?” Most of the time, that admonition is ill-founded. The private sector transforms itself with relative frequency because market forces pressure it to organize according to the needs of the market. The private sector is market-driven. Although these market forces may be absent in the public sector, there are other powerful forces pressuring public programs to organize according to the needs of the beneficiaries, referred to as beneficiary-driven.

*The ethic of a public program is its potential to connect people with benefits.*

Three forces in particular have emerged to pressure public programs:

1. A post-Katrina wake-up call to better define and deliver a program’s real purpose.
2. The public’s increasing demands for greater transparency and accountability.
3. A relentless media searching for fraud, waste and abuse.

Under a beneficiary-driven approach, a program organizes its resources (time, money and energy) to optimize its potential to connect people (beneficiaries) with benefits - beneficiaries being anyone in the chain to deliver and/or receive program benefits.

*Look to deliver benefits regardless of where they exist.*

Indeed, this approach has been successfully applied in the public sector to achieve dramatic improvements in connecting people to benefits in faster, cheaper and better ways. However, thus far, it has been applied in just a few cases; many more programs could benefit from this beneficiary-driven approach.

## *Details of the Beneficiary-Driven Approach*

---

At a fundamental level, public programs exist to connect people with benefits. Congress creates and funds them, and the Administration supports them, precisely because they ensure benefits accrue to the citizen beneficiaries. However, over time, many programs have become fixated less on the beneficiaries and more on the minutiae of the program itself. Even the names of some programs describe the administrative aspects of the program more than they identify the beneficiaries and benefits. Take the Small Business Administration’s 7(a) or 504 loan programs – what do these names tell a potential beneficiary about them, except that small businesses appear to be beneficiaries and some kind of loan exists? The name has little resonance with the intended beneficiaries; it is a program-centric name.

This does not mean to argue that a program must list its beneficiaries or benefits in its name. It simply highlights that many programs focus on themselves as programs and less as creators and distributors of benefits. As this frame of mind becomes ingrained in the staff, the program can lose touch with the original intent and goals of aiding the beneficiaries. The program becomes more about running the program – an administrative concern – and less about delivering benefits to the intended beneficiaries.

### **“Where’s my FEMA Trailer?”**

*We live in an era of real-time beneficiary expectations. Those expectations come, and can change, at an unprecedented pace.*

Ultimately, because of this program-driven culture, opportunities to realize a program's potential to connect people with benefits may go unrealized.

**Beneficiaries:**

*Anyone in the chain to deliver and/or receive benefits*

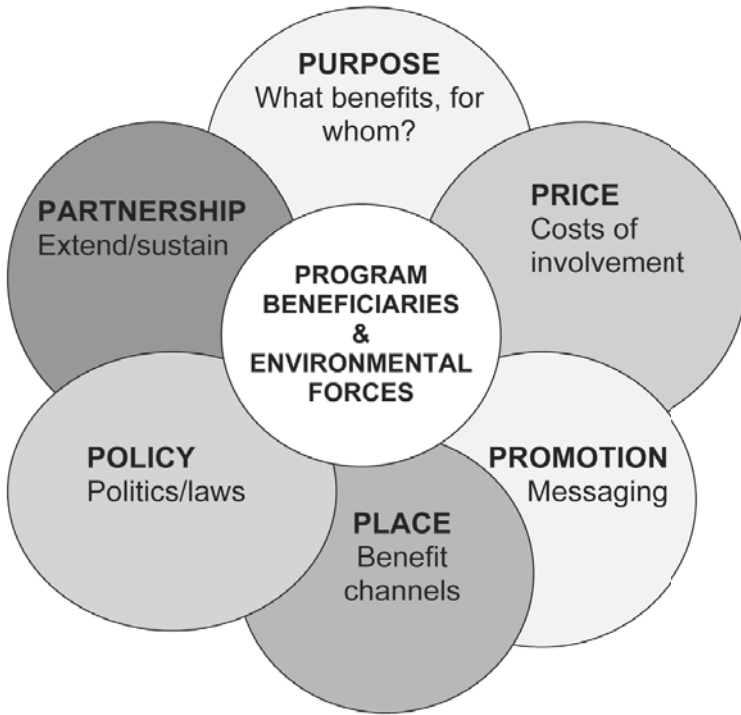
In contrast, with a beneficiary-driven approach, a program focuses intently on its beneficiaries. It often re-evaluates its understanding of those beneficiaries and how their needs evolve over time. In fact, everything the program does – from new benefit creation to delivery to customer service — can be directly linked to connecting people to benefits. This singular focus makes a tangible difference in terms of mission achievement, program performance, employee engagement and beneficiary satisfaction.

How does a program begin the process of moving closer toward its potential of connecting people with benefits? Due to market forces in the private sector, a market-driven company is constantly optimizing a mix of 4Ps - Product, Price, Promotion and Place. With several important twists, the same approach can be applied to the public sector where a beneficiary-driven program looks to optimize a mix of 6Ps.

## *The 6P's – Six Controllable Program Variables*

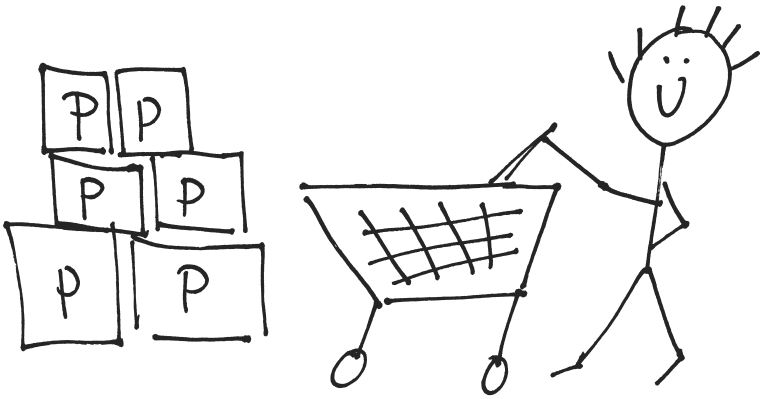
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1. **Purpose:** What benefits are we delivering and for whom?
2. **Price:** What are the physical and emotional costs of involvement to the beneficiaries, from their perspective?
3. **Promotion:** What misperceptions impact our message and where in the stages of behavior change do these beneficiaries exist? Messages don't change beneficiaries - beneficiaries change our messages.
4. **Place:** Can we go to the beneficiaries? How does our delivery of benefits impact emotional and physical costs for beneficiaries?
5. **Policy:** Which laws impact our ability to connect people with benefits? What societal norms are we dependent on?
6. **Partnership:** How can the program extend and sustain itself, regardless of our own resource levels and regardless of where the benefits exist? What partnerships make sense according to the lifestyles, attitudes and beliefs of the beneficiary?



**Beneficiary-driven: Optimizing a program's mix of 6Ps relative to its beneficiaries and environmental forces**

By optimizing its mix of 6Ps, a program begins a beneficiary-driven transformation and positions itself to realize its potential to connect people with benefits. Examining a few examples – two programs that would benefit from and one that has already utilized the beneficiary-driven approach to better connect people with benefits – will illuminate this approach.



## Example 1: Organ Donation

---

### *Another Organ Donation Model*

*In some countries, living donors rise to the top of recipient lists should they need an organ transplant in the future.*

Most people would agree that organ donation saves lives and creates real benefits for the beneficiary. Most people would also agree that increased organ donation is in the interest of the public good.

The purpose of an organ donation program is to save lives. But how? In the United States, consider how organ donation is approached from a program-driven perspective. Indeed, the political, cultural, ethical and legal issues tend to shape every dimension of organ donation. As a result, thousands of people die every year because they cannot find an organ donor. But how might that situation change if

organ donation was approached from a beneficiary-driven approach? The 6Ps provides a useful construct to examine this.

- 1. Purpose:** The purpose of organ donation is to connect those in need (one of the beneficiaries) with organs (benefits). But the number of deceased donors who agreed to donate organs upon death does not meet demand. What benefits of the organ donation program might resonate with a living pro-

spective donor (a key beneficiary who is part of the chain of delivering benefits) to get them to agree to donate their organs upon death? Put another way, how can potential donors be persuaded to participate in much higher numbers?

2. **Price:** It's easy to convince the organ recipient to take advantage of the benefits of an organ donation program. However, the cost of involvement - the price - for a prospective living organ donor is extremely high in terms of fear, uncertainty and doubt. How can this price, the cost of involvement, be significantly reduced in the mind of this beneficiary?
3. **Promotion:** The necessity of organ donation does not seem as ever-present as, for example, the tragedies of cancer or AIDS. Why? Also, all of us know potential living donors who would be in a position to donate their organs. Could these facts be used to significantly increase those willing to donate organs? What benefits would speak to a potential living organ donor in no uncertain terms? Also, might there be a program name, other than "Organ Donation," that in no uncertain terms articulates to the potential donor that they will be "gaining" a very real benefit right now if they agree to donate?
4. **Place:** The donation decision today often happens at the local Department of Motor Vehicles. What other places makes sense relative to the beneficiary's lifestyle, attitudes and beliefs?

5. **Policy:** With organ donation, legal and ethical issues must be considered. But many countries have harmonized these considerations to move closer towards maximizing the potential of their organ donation program. How can the United States alter its societal norms and maximize its organ donation program potential? Could we also consider a system where “opt-in” is the default and “opt-out” is the decision presented?
  
6. **Partnership:** What partnerships make sense relative to the beneficiaries – donor and recipient— where the organ donation program could sustain and extend itself in new ways and optimize its potential to save lives?

Undoubtedly, organ donation speaks very clearly to the beneficiary who will receive the organ. Looking at the donor as a beneficiary as well compels us to structure meaningful program choices and benefits they can enjoy while alive to dramatically increase participation rates.

If the purpose is to save lives, taking a beneficiary-driven approach — and even expanding the definition of beneficiaries — might make the difference between long waiting lists and fully met demand.

## Example 2: Small Business Contracting Initiatives

Small business is the backbone of the American economy. It employs more than half of the workforce. It is the cradle of product and service innovation and creativity, enhancing people's lives and business operations. For these reasons, the federal government wants to benefit from the abilities and capabilities of small businesses. But it is hard for a single small business to market itself to the federal government, and similarly difficult for the federal government to find the right small business to serve its needs. To help derive benefits from small business, each agency is supported by an Office of Small and Disadvantage Business Utilization (OSDBU) whose mission is to advocate for small business procurement.

OSDBU is program-driven, because the name speaks to the program, not to the target beneficiaries. Who are the beneficiaries of the OSDBU program? Is it only the small business? One primary beneficiary is the government program manager who must be convinced that the OSDBU program delivers benefits that meet their needs. Like the recipient of an

**OSDBU Beneficiaries**  
*From a program-driven perspective, small business is the beneficiary of the OSDBU. But from a beneficiary-driven perspective, the agency program manager has to be seen as a primary beneficiary.*

organ, small business as a beneficiary requires little convincing to receive the benefits from the OSDBU program. Indeed, thousands of small business are pre-approved and stand ready to serve through the GSA Schedules program.

A beneficiary-driven OSDBU approach would seek to realize its potential by optimizing the program mix of the 6Ps.

- 1. Purpose:** OSDBU exists to connect people with benefits or to connect program managers or others in the chain with the benefits of small business. Because the procurement decision can occur at the program level, a primary beneficiary of the OSDBU program is an agency program manager — the person who has the business need and the money to spend on small business.
- 2. Price:** The cost of involvement for the program manager, like the prospective living organ donor, includes fear, uncertainty and doubt. The program manager may perceive that contracting with small business is risky, time-consuming and difficult. From the program manager perspective, the cost of involvement or the price of the OSDBU program may be too high, the benefits too low.
- 3. Promotion:** Thousands of small business GSA schedule holders stand ready to reap the benefits of the OSDBU program. They don't need to be convinced of the program's benefits. However, messaging and benefits that speak to the needs of

the program manager while demonstrating OSDBU benefits could provide an opportunity. Implying that small business procurement is good for America may not be perceived as a compelling primary benefit for the program manager.

- 4. Place:** Consider how and where the decision to contract with a small business is made by a program manager. Program managers need to be engaged where they are, and in relevant terms and platforms. What other opportunities exist to engage program managers in the advantages of OSDBU benefits other than large forums where small business vendors are ready to jump?

*“Free Benefits” are only free from the perspective of the program. Beneficiaries may think otherwise.*

- 5. Policy:** Of course, it is in the federal and national interest to engage small businesses in federal contracting. Those policies are well-defined, and some must be followed. However, too often, policy has become the “stick” in a program-driven model. A beneficiary-driven program approach creates real “carrots” for program managers.
- 6. Partnership:** To sustain and extend the OSDBU program beyond its own resources and in creative and effective ways that address the needs of program managers, look to partners that are motivated to help connect OSDBU benefits with program managers.

The OSDBU program believes that agencies can benefit from small business creativity and ingenuity, often at less risk and cost. A beneficiary-driven OSDBU program has the potential to increase small business contracting by aligning its benefits and messages with the needs of a primary beneficiary – the internal agency program manager. Applied intelligently, this approach presents an opportunity to create a transformative shift in effectiveness from today’s OSDBU program-driven model.

## Example 3: Personal Savings Rate in the United States

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For most of us, increasing our savings leads to less debt later in life and provides for a more independent retirement. That is a good thing. Now consider how a program might attempt to increase the savings rate among a low-income population in an economically depressed area of the country — after all, this is another at-risk population.

Interestingly enough, a small band of credit unions in Michigan accomplished such a goal<sup>2</sup>. Optimizing the 6Ps from a beneficiary-driven perspective, we can begin to see a new approach.

1. **Purpose:** Help lower-income Americans increase their savings rate through an awareness/education/incentive program.
2. **Price:** The cost of involvement appears at first glance to be high. Beneficiaries of the program must not only set aside money that they might not realize they have, but must be convinced of the benefits of delayed gratification.

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2. Ann Stuhldreher, "Credit Unions launch a savings lottery, and everyone hits the jackpot," *The Washington Post*, Sunday, February 7, 2010; B04.

3. **Promotion:** Research indicated that these beneficiaries considered the act of purchasing lottery tickets a form of savings. They believed that this method was their best shot at accumulating large savings for the future. The credit unions developed a “Save to Win” program – for every \$25 saved and held for one year, the investor earned a ticket for a \$100,000 drawing. The “Save to Win” program drove more than 11,000 residents to open new accounts, resulting in \$8.6 million in deposits – an explosive savings growth. The combination of saving and playing the lottery resonated in familiar terms, the benefits of the program for the beneficiary.

*Consider redirecting an existing behavior rather than changing that behavior.*

4. **Place:** Understanding where the beneficiaries already were located and how they purchased lottery tickets, credit unions established similar channels to participate and deliver benefits — to “Save and Play,” as they put it.
5. **Policy:** Certainly the concept of a lottery-type promotion will have legal and or policy implications. The opportunity is to determine how to leverage such policies as well as understand the social rules/norms driving the beneficiary.

6. **Partnership:** Extending the program in a lottery fashion and considering new ways to participate with lottery outlets created opportunities to move beyond the current paradigm of how and where people are motivated to save.



## MARY'S ELEVATION

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Mary is in process. Mary is learning.

She realizes that the true purpose of her program is to maximize its potential to connect people with benefits in pursuit of outcomes.

Mary thinks about her program beneficiaries differently now that she sees them as anyone in the chain who not only receives program benefits, but also delivers them.

And most importantly, Mary pays attention to staying within her professional boundaries to best align her work (output) with the needs of the program. At the same time, Mary can measure her success, vital for her career progression.

Mary can contribute to program outcomes by delivering on her approved program outputs. Just like her other colleagues, she understands her role as a single input in a complex system of many working to deliver outputs, all in an orchestrated pursuit of outcomes.

Reflecting on Gheppeto's and Biff maximizing his outcome potential, Mary considers a startling question: "If my program can achieve its outcome objectives more efficiently and effectively by using inputs and outputs outside of the

current system, will they choose this alternative path? Must they choose this path? If so, what does this mean for my career?”

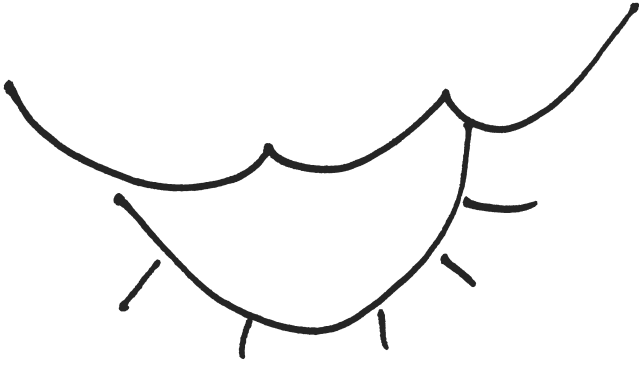
Mary calls her friend Julie, who works within another agency.

“Julie, if you could meet your program outcomes more efficiently and effectively by not using any of your current resources or inputs to produce the work or outputs of the program, would you do it?”

Julie ponders Mary’s question, and responds, “All things being equal, absolutely. You see, Mary, I answer to the American taxpayer. Measurable results are what matter Mary, not just spending more money or using only the resources from within our organization.”

At home, Mary wrestles with how she might elevate her position to where the connection between her work and program results is crystal clear. If nothing else than for job security. After what Julie said, Mary is convinced this is a wise connection to make.





# MARY'S TRANSFORMATION

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Like Biff, Mary wishes she had more money. But that won't happen any time soon, if ever. Understanding that “at any resource level, something can be accomplished,” Mary starts to devise a practical plan for moving beyond her output work.

In the past, Mary struggled with professional language and process to effectively engage the program on outcomes. Indeed, it was always the program demanding innovation from her. Innovation to drive outcomes. Previously, Mary accepted this innovation outcome mantra as her burden, resulting in more suffering.

Mary understands that she doesn't have to solve anyone's problems related to program outcomes. This is not her job, because she does not have the responsibility or the authority to impact most inputs and outputs.

Mary wisely chooses to view part of her job as an “outcome consultant” where she guides program management through a new process. A process that helps her program debate decisions and choices that drive innovation.

At the same time, Mary recognizes that the outcome game is very different than the output game – the outcome game is rife with political and organization turf battles that she is not equipped to fight. Indeed, these battles are not hers to fight.

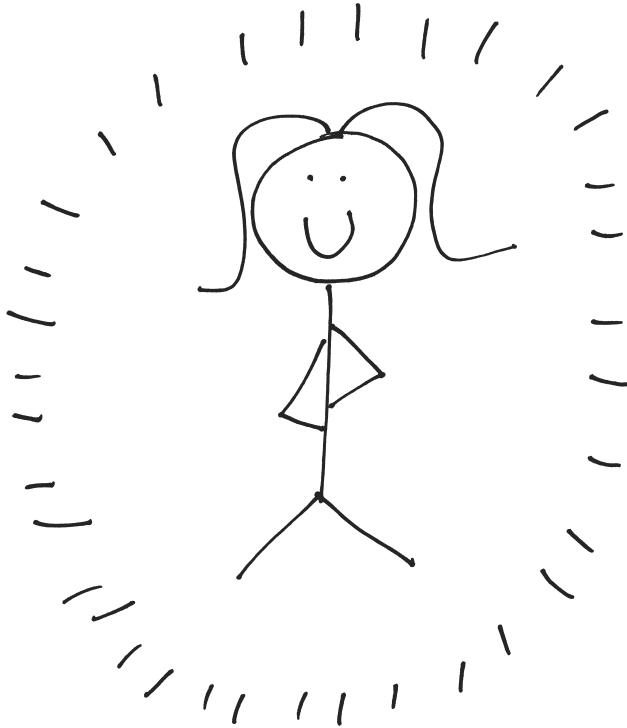
Instead of waiting for program management to approach her for outcome results, Mary approaches the program with an offer of her own. For a little bit of their time, she offers to deliver an assessment of the program to uncover the gap between the current state and the desired state.

And through this process, Mary understands she will not need to provide her opinions or answers. Indeed, program management has plenty of opinions. No, Mary's job is to solicit information from the program. First, base lining the program with management acknowledging where they stand relative to each of the 6 Ps. Second, documenting where the program would like to exist relative to the 6Ps — this difference is known as the “gap,” and is, perhaps, Mary's opportunity for advancement.

For now, the next several weeks are exciting for Mary as she interviews program management about their hopes, desires and fears for the program. Today as well as tomorrow. Program Management is identifying their gaps, and Mary is documenting this information.

Similar to a physician helping a patient lose weight, the doctor can document the state of the patient today. The patient identifies a desired state, and the physician will confirm the gap the patient needs to close to meet the desired state. When ready to close the gap, the patient will ask the “how” question, giving the physician permission to engage in a dialogue about practical intervention strategies. The physician need not make any promises or provide any silver

bullets. In this relationship, both sides can feel confident in owning those things they can control.



And as the information is captured, something special occurs. Mary has more energy and fewer blockages in her day-to-day work. She is less concerned about problems, fears and hiding, and more engaged about opportunities. Staff notices an extra kick in Mary's step.

Program management is impressed with Mary's new outcome approach and wants to know more about the 6Ps. Mary recites the pizza story as a metaphor for possibilities never imagined.

Mary now views her role differently relative to program outcomes and so does the program. Mary chooses to speak in the affirmative. She no longer mentions what can't be done, but rather what can be done at any resource level of time, money and energy?

Mary is on her path to maximizing her potential, and as it goes for Mary, so goes the program. Intelligently done, Mary and the program are stronger.

Remember Mary, a public program exists to maximize its potential to connect people to benefits in pursuit of outcomes. Indeed, in pursuit of a stronger nation.

# MARKETING PUBLIC PROGRAMS – DELIVERING OUTPUTS

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Mary is conscious of the importance of identifying her primary work as output-producing. She looks to the TRACK framework to optimize her resources of time, money and energy.

Mary answers the following questions to ground her communication and outreach work in principle and discipline.

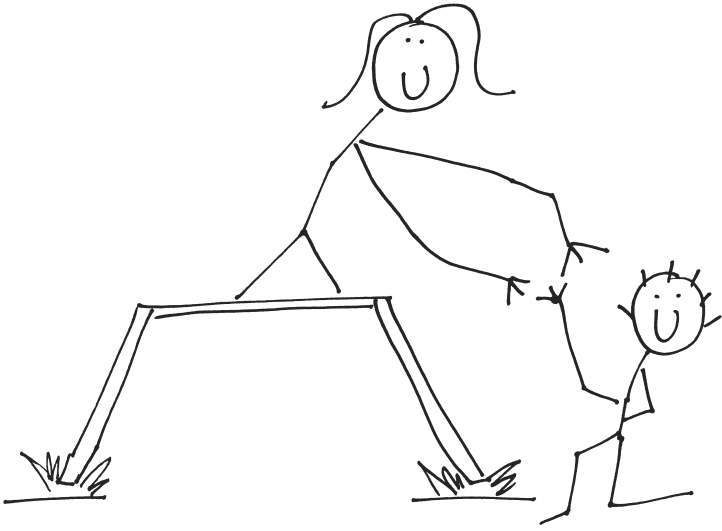
**T**ARGET:           Who is my target audience?  
                          What is my target goal?

**R**ESONATE:        What message will resonate emotionally and physically with my target audience?

**A**CTION:            What action am I asking of my target audience? If they don't take action, what action should I pursue? Is it reasonable and practical?

**C**ONNECT:         How can I physically connect with my target audience?

**K**EEP:                How can I sustain and extend my effort regardless of future resources?



# MARKETING PUBLIC PROGRAMS – DELIVERING OUTCOMES

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Mary knows the importance of recognizing that her work must be elevated when it is outcome-producing. Mary is paying attention.

Mary invites the program to identify its current and desired state relative to the 6P framework below. This process and the resulting “GAP” analysis provide Mary and the program with a platform to reduce program suffering.

When ready to close the gap, the program will ask the “how” question, giving Mary permission to engage in a dialogue about practical intervention strategies to close the “GAP.” Mary doesn’t need to make promises or provide silver bullets. From this elevated relationship, both sides can feel confident in owning the things they can control.

## Delivering Outcomes through a 6P GAP Analysis

	CURRENT	DESIRED	GAP
<b>1. Purpose:</b> What benefits are we delivering and for whom?			
<b>2. Price:</b> What are the physical and emotional costs of involvement to the beneficiaries from their perspective?			
<b>3. Promotion:</b> What misperceptions impact our message? Where in the stages of behavior change do these beneficiaries exist? (Messages don't change beneficiaries, beneficiaries change our messages.)			

## Delivering Outcomes through a 6P GAP Analysis

	CURRENT	DESIRED	GAP
<p><b>4. Place:</b> Can we go to the beneficiaries? How does our delivery of benefits impact emotional and physical costs for beneficiaries?</p>			
<p><b>5. Policy:</b> Which laws impact our ability to connect people with benefits? What societal norms are we dependent on?</p>			
<p><b>6. Partnership:</b> How can the program extend and sustain itself, regardless of our own resource levels and regardless of where the benefits exist? What partnerships make sense according to the lifestyles, attitudes and beliefs of the beneficiary?</p>			

# MARKETING PUBLIC PROGRAMS – PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

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Mary reinforces her professional boundaries through the appropriate understanding and use of performance measures so vital for her success. It is helpful for Mary to consider those measures she can control.

## *Types of Performance Measures*

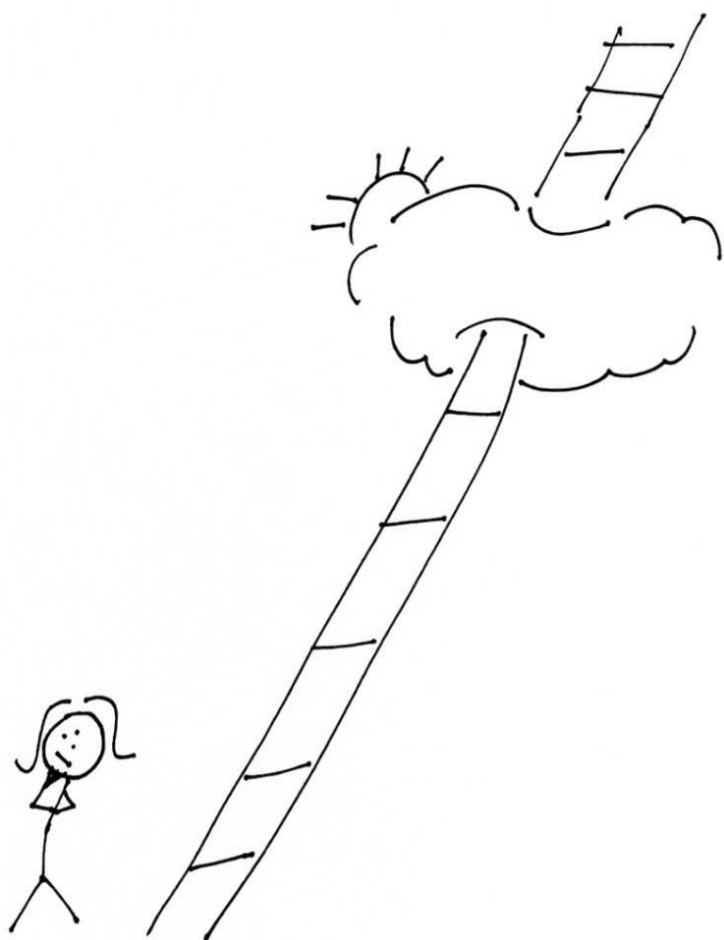
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Measures	Definition	Examples
Inputs	Resources consumed by the program	FTE, money, materials, etc.
Activities	Worked performed to produce program products and services	Number of training classes designed, hours of technical assistance training for staff, number of compliance workbooks developed

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Outputs	Program product and services produced from program activity	Number of training classes conducted, number of technical assistance requests responded to, number of compliance workbooks delivered
Outcomes	Accomplishment of program objectives; attributable to program outputs	Pounds of pollutants reduced, miles of beaches cleaned, improvement in public health
Program Beneficiaries Reached	Measure of target audience receiving outputs	Percent of target audience trained, number of target audience receiving technical assistance
Program Beneficiary Satisfaction	Measure of satisfaction with outputs	Percent of beneficiaries dissatisfied with training, percent of beneficiaries very satisfied with assistance received

Measures	Definition	Examples
Efficiency	The ratio of the amount of input to the amount of output with focus on operating efficiency – relating output to some specific resource in terms of cost or time	Cost per workbook produced, cost per inspection conducted
Productivity	Measure of the rate of production per some specific unit of resource (e.g. staff or employee) with focus on labor productivity	Number of enforcement cases investigated per inspector
Cost-Effectiveness	Measure that relates outcomes to costs	Cost per pounds of pollutants reduced, cost per mile of beach cleaned
Service Quality	Measure of the quality of products and services produced	Percent of technical assistance requests responded to within one week





# THE BEGINNING

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Like it or not, this Mary has been given: a public program.

How can Mary balance her career interests, and, at the same time, strengthen her program?

Through a little suffering and reflection, Mary will understand her communication and outreach role relative to the program. Mary will learn how to effectively and efficiently market her public program.

Part of Mary's path will lead her to systems thinking. This will ground Mary in the comfort of knowing the roles of all parties, most importantly hers, within the program.

But behold the battle cry of innovation to deliver outcomes.

Mary is one force that can shape her program. At the same time, a program is in process, shaped by forces beyond Mary's control.

Mary will learn what it really means to deliver outcomes for her program. And in her moment of insight, she will be faced with a decision. Does she have the desire, the energy and the skills to elevate her and the program to a higher level? With only desire, Mary and the program continue to suffer.

True innovation, Mary learns, requires new skills. From this new perspective, Mary has found a path for transforming herself in pursuit of a stronger nation.

# CONTINUING YOUR TRANSFORMATION

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- Join the discussion with Mary and her peers by signing up for Google Groups:

Google groups

## **Marketing Public Programs - extending the classroom**

A new day for public program outreach and communication professionals interested in elevating their careers and strengthening their programs by sharing ideas and best practices.

web:

<http://groups.google.com/group/marketingpublicprograms>

email:

[marketingpublicprograms@googlegroups.com](mailto:marketingpublicprograms@googlegroups.com)

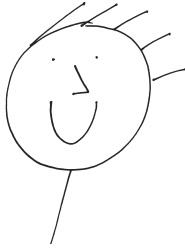
- Share Mary's insights with your program by starting a dialogue around key concepts in this story.

- Share Mary's insights with peers outside your program by distributing this story.  
Accessible at [www.marketingpublicprograms.org/mary](http://www.marketingpublicprograms.org/mary)
- Attend the two-day course, Marketing Public Programs. More information at [www.marketingpublicprograms.org/overview.php](http://www.marketingpublicprograms.org/overview.php)
- Reach out to the authors and discuss how this story impacts your program.

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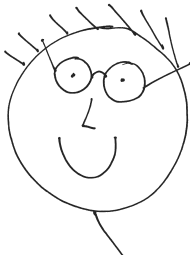
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### **Alan Minton**

Alan is the co-founder of the Track Group, Inc. located in Alexandria, VA. Alan consults with Federal Agencies seeking to transform their public programs. Alan also teaches the course

Marketing Public Programs to public program executives and outreach and communication professionals. These public servants inspired Alan to write this book in pursuit of ending their suffering and at the same time, making their careers and programs stronger. Alan be reached at (703) 941-7766 x103, [alan@trackg.com](mailto:alan@trackg.com)



### **David Ehrlich**

Dave is the other co-founder of the Track Group, Inc. located in Alexandria, VA. David is a key architect in driving transformational change for public programs. He was instrumental in developing the Marketing Public Programs

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# The Marketing of a Public Program

Mary's darkest hour is upon her, as her program's quest for performance plunges her career into despair.

In order to save herself and the program, Mary must uncover the meaning of her role as an outreach and communications professional and just as importantly, the true purpose of her public program.

In the pursuit of outcomes, a program is born to exploit economies of scale and to reduce coordination costs and risk.

To this end, programs deliver outcomes, but projects deliver outputs.

The time has come to maximize a public program's potential, and for Mary to transform her work in pursuit of a stronger nation.



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