

PROVIDING CUTTING-EDGE
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GOVERNMENT LEADERS

What All Mayors Would Like to Know About Baltimore's CitiStat Performance Strategy

Managing for Performance and Results Series



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IBM Center for
**The Business
of Government**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Letter to City Mayors	6
What Exactly Is CitiStat?	7
The Concept	7
The Purpose	8
The Commitment	9
How Does a City Get Started?	11
The Beginning	11
Initial Progress	12
What Measures and Data Does a City Need?	14
The Measures	14
The Data	15
Who Has What Responsibilities?	18
The Mayor	18
The CitiStat Staff	20
The Agency Director and Managers	23
What Kind of Infrastructure Does a City Need?	25
The Room	25
The Technology	26
The Budget	27
What Is the Purpose, Operation, and Impact of the Meetings?	29
The Participants in the Meeting	29
The Conduct of the Meetings	30
The Preparation for the Meetings	32
How Does CitiStat Affect Key Relationships?	34
City Council Members	34
Agency Directors and Managers	34
Agencies	35
Unions	35
City Employees	35
Citizens	36
Journalists	36
Other Stakeholders	37

Cover photo: Seated at the center of the table opposite the podium, former Mayor Martin O'Malley listens to a presentation at a Baltimore CitiStat meeting.

Photo courtesy of the City of Baltimore.

What Did Baltimore Accomplish?	38
Results	38
Cause and Effect	43
What Is the Future of CitiStat?	45
Uniqueness	45
Evolution	45
Sustainability	46
Endnotes	48
About the Author	52
Key Contact Information	53

F O R E W O R D

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, "What All Mayors Would Like to Know About Baltimore's CitiStat Performance Strategy," by Robert D. Behn.

This report continues the Center's long interest in Baltimore's CitiStat program, an exemplar of managing for performance in government. In 2003, the IBM Center for The Business of Government published a case study of the program by Lenneal Henderson, "The Baltimore CitiStat Program: Performance and Accountability." In 2004, Baltimore's CitiStat was selected as an Innovation in American Government Award winner.

As the CitiStat program received increased attention, Baltimore became a frequent destination for mayors from across the United States and the world to visit so they could learn how the program worked. Based on these visits and ongoing discussions with CitiStat staff, Dr. Behn prepared this report to summarize and present the questions most frequently posed to CitiStat staff and to Mayor Martin O'Malley. In January 2007, Mayor O'Malley was sworn in as governor of Maryland and quickly began implementing a StateStat program. The new mayor of Baltimore, Sheila Dixon, has continued the CitiStat program.

While most visiting mayors were impressed with CitiStat and aspired to replicate the program, many were not sure how to proceed in bringing CitiStat to their city. This report explains how CitiStat should be viewed as a leadership strategy rather than a management system. When viewed as a leadership strategy, Dr. Behn argues, the program can be replicated and customized to each mayor's individual needs and priorities.



Albert Morales



Michael C. Powell

A key insight from this report is that there is no single, right approach as to how to develop a successful management performance and accountability structure. Success depends heavily on clear goals, committed leadership, and persistent follow-up. As Dr. Behn says, “... those who would design a CitiStat for [their] city need to start with their purpose.”

We believe this report offers a clear road map for other mayors and government leaders who may be interested in pursuing the CitiStat strategy. The lessons in this report are also clearly relevant to other government organizations at the federal, state, and local level. A recent IBM Center for The Business of Government report, “The Philadelphia SchoolStat Model,” shows how the strategy has been adapted to an urban school district. The CitiStat strategy has been adapted for use in state government as well.



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LETTER TO CITY MAYORS

Dear Mayor:

So you've heard about CitiStat. Perhaps you saw Baltimore's former mayor, Martin O'Malley, extol its virtues.¹ Perhaps you heard Baltimore's current mayor, Sheila Dixon, explain how she is adapting it to her administration's priorities. Perhaps you learned about it at a conference, or by reading about it in a magazine² or report³ or online.⁴ And you've heard that CitiStat can improve the performance of city agencies—that it can motivate a city's managers and employees to produce the kind of results that citizens value.

Now you want your own CitiStat.

But what exactly does this mean? What does it entail? What do you need to do? What do you need to do first? What do you need to worry about? What are the potential pitfalls? What can you expect to accomplish? Should you really bother? I'm sure that you have lots of questions.

This report is designed to answer all of the questions that you have—plus some that may never have occurred to you. These answers will help you get started, recruit an effective staff, create the necessary (though minimal) infrastructure, achieve some successes, learn from these successes (and the inevitable failures too), and create a durable (if evolving) performance strategy that can motivate a city's managers and employees to produce the kind of results that you promised during your election campaign.

As with anything else you try to do in your city, the details matter—they matter a lot. And these details inevitably depend on other particulars—everything from what your citizens expect your administration to accomplish, to the current capacity of your different city agencies, to your own governing style. Consequently, the answers to these questions cannot be definitive. You can't just copy the Baltimore "model." You will need to recognize the core idea contained in each answer and then figure out how to make it work in your own city with its own unique problems and opportunities.

Still, the CitiStat performance strategy is not something that is and must be unique to Baltimore. It can prove effective in a variety of governmental jurisdictions—including yours.

And if you have any more questions, don't call me. Call Governor Martin O'Malley or Mayor Sheila Dixon.



What Exactly Is CitiStat?

CitiStat sounds like a wonderful idea. But what is it, really? A mayor may have seen the CitiStat room. A mayor may have watched a CitiStat meeting. A mayor may have talked with the CitiStat staff. A mayor may have examined some CitiStat data. A mayor may have admired a few CitiStat maps. Yet, this mayor may still not be sure exactly what CitiStat is.

The Concept

Q: What exactly is CitiStat?

A: A leadership strategy!

CitiStat is a leadership strategy that a mayor can employ to mobilize city agencies to produce specific results.⁵

The obvious and operational components of CitiStat are its meetings and questions, its targets and data. But these visible features are only the vehicles by which the mayor focuses the personal attention, the management energy, the operational tactics, and the creative talents of the people in individual city agencies on the task of producing clearly specified results.

Consequently, one way for a mayor to think about CitiStat might be:

A city is employing a CitiStat performance strategy if it holds an ongoing series of *regular, periodic meetings* during which the mayor and/or the principal members of the mayor's leadership team plus the individual director (and the top managers) of different city agencies *use data* to analyze the agency's past *performance*, to establish its next *performance objectives*, and to examine its overall *performance strategies*.



Photo courtesy of the City of Baltimore.

View from the north gallery of the CitiStat room. Former Mayor Martin O'Malley reviews CitiStat surveys.

This characterization is not a very demanding one. Technically, all that it requires is “an ongoing series of regular, periodic meetings” plus the actual “use” of some “data”—all designed to improve the “performance” of city agencies. Given, however, that these meetings are “ongoing,” “regular,” and “periodic,” one subtle feature of CitiStat is often missed by casual observers: This ongoing discussion of performance involves much persistent follow-up on past performance deficits and previous commitments to fix specific problems, as well as follow-up on decisions, commitments, and established expectations for future performance improvements.

In practice, however, CitiStat is much more complex. The key aspect of this way of thinking about public management is the clear, express, detailed focus on performance. This focus is revealed in the effort to learn what the data reveal about the achievements and deficiencies of past performance; in the establishment of specific targets for future performance; and in the development, testing, evaluation,

and adjustments of operational tactics that can build on past achievements, remedy past deficiencies, and bring about future improvements. Thus, CitiStat is more than meetings and data. It requires:

- Targets (which provide benchmarks for judging successes and failure)
- Tactics (which focus organizational efforts on achieving the targets)
- Data (which track the performance of agencies and subunits)
- Analysis (which, using the data, identifies the causes of both success and failure)
- Questions (which reveal what agencies are doing and not doing to achieve their targets)
- Learning (which comes from these analyses, questions, and answers)
- Collaboration (which helps the mayor's staff and the agency's director and managers⁶ to determine what to do next)
- Experimentation (which creates new ways of achieving success)
- Meetings (which regularly review agency progress, targets, analyses, and strategies)
- Thinking (which can suggest how the entire approach can be improved)

If a mayor and his leadership team are doing these things consciously, persistently, imaginatively, and skillfully, they are undoubtedly doing something that—even if it does not have the outward appearance of Baltimore's CitiStat—accomplishes the CitiStat's purpose: to improve the performance of city government.

Q: What is CitiStat not?

A: *CitiStat is not a system.*

There is no correct, prescribed, fixed "model" for CitiStat. No one has created the "mold" from which all other CitiStats must be cast. There exists no organizational "genome" from which to create a DNA test to determine whether a CitiStat is a true descendent of the original. No one has designed the template that a city must methodically follow if it is to officially qualify as practicing CitiStat.⁷

This is bad news; it discredits the dream of simply copying the Baltimore "system." At the same time, it is good news; it licenses a mayor to adapt the core concept of CitiStat to his or her specific purposes and the city's own, unique circumstances.

Indeed, any mayor *must* adapt the core concepts of CitiStat to reflect his or her own leadership strategy, with specific components that respond to the current needs of the city, the operational capacities of its agencies, and his or her own political and managerial agenda.

The Purpose

Q: What is CitiStat designed to accomplish?

A: *More and better results!*

CitiStat is designed to improve the performance of every city agency. Each city agency is charged with producing results. Otherwise the agency has no reason to exist. Thus, the purpose of CitiStat is to help, motivate, cajole, and, if necessary, pressure agency managers to achieve more and better results.

Q: Whose results?

A: *The mayor's results!*

As the city's elected chief executive, the mayor is the official responsible for the overall management of the city—for establishing its strategic direction and producing results. And, obviously, the citizens elected this mayor because they expected that he or she would accomplish something—perhaps some very specific somethings that the mayor promised during the campaign, perhaps just some general somethings that now need to be translated into specific operational improvements.⁸

At the same time, the mayor is not apt to have a long, detailed list of very pointed results to be produced by every subunit within every agency in the city. For some items at the top of his or her agenda, the mayor may have very explicit ideas about the specific results that a specific department, agency, or unit needs to produce. In other circumstances, the mayor will rely on the judgments of others—key stakeholders, people on his or her own leadership team, as well as the political appointees and civil servants in the departments.

In many circumstances, the mayor will preside over some subtle negotiations—perhaps merely called “discussions”—with the various parties. In an attempt to decide what agencies need to produce what results, the people engaged in these discussions will attempt to answer a number of questions: What do the citizens expect? What does the mayor expect? What can we afford? What can the agency’s personnel deliver? What mental, strategic, tactical, and/or operational changes would we need to make if we wanted to produce more? What kinds of changes can be expected to produce what level of improvements?

For some departments in Baltimore, Mayor O’Malley had some very specific ideas about the performance targets that he wanted them to achieve. For other departments, he established the overall framework but was open to suggestions about what exactly the targets should be. For still other departments, he permitted the selection of targets to be worked out by his CitiStat staff and the department’s managers.

Q: What kind of results?

A: *Service-delivery targets.*

In Baltimore, Mayor O’Malley and his staff established a set of key performance targets for every city agency. Each target reflected a specific type of service that the city provided to its citizens that was to be completed within a specific time period.

For example, O’Malley established the “48-hour pothole guarantee.” If a citizen called in a request to fill a pothole, the Department of Public Works would fill that pothole within 48 hours.

Q: How does CitiStat produce these results?

A: *Through leadership!*

Again: CitiStat is not a mechanical system. It is not an evaluation scheme. It is not a computer program. CitiStat is a leadership strategy that permits the mayor and his management team to track, analyze, appraise, diagnose, and improve the results produced by every city agency.

This requires leadership—active leadership by the mayor, by the mayor’s key deputies, and by agency managers. In any organization (public, private, or nonprofit) of any size (a large corporation or a small

local office), the top manager cannot expect to produce results in absentia. To produce real results, the manager must be personally engaged in everything from establishing the targets to be achieved, to monitoring progress, to analyzing failures, to rewarding success.

The top manager can delegate some of these core tasks to others. This requires, however, that the top manager clearly establish that the deputies to whom these tasks have been delegated speak for the manager. If subordinates learn that they can go directly to the top manager—over the heads of these deputies—and win, the deputies will be neutralized. They will be able to accomplish nothing.

In Baltimore, Mayor O’Malley made it clear to all that First Deputy Mayor Michael Enright and CitiStat Director Matthew Gallagher spoke for him. Indeed, after a few years, O’Malley rarely attended CitiStat meetings. Nevertheless, the CitiStat strategy remained effective because everyone knew that Enright and Gallagher—and, over time, the younger members of the CitiStat staff—were always operating with the mayor’s explicit, personal authority and approval.

The Commitment

Q: What kind of commitment does CitiStat require?

A: *A real, serious commitment.*

No mayor should initiate the creation of CitiStat without fully recognizing the implications of the undertaking. After all, most city employees and many managers of city agencies will quickly interpret it as yet another management fad. They’ve seen it all: management by objectives and total quality management, zero-based budgeting and performance-based budgeting, the balanced scorecard and the organizational dashboards. They aren’t going to get too excited about the mayor’s latest little brain-storm (or brief mental shower). From experience, they have determined how best to cope with the latest mayor’s random neuron firings. Why bother, they have learned, when this will soon disappear, to be replaced by another mayoral impulse?

Thus, a mayor who wishes to establish CitiStat not only needs to make a real commitment; he or she also needs to dramatize this commitment.

Q: How can a mayor demonstrate his or her commitment to CitiStat?**A: *By spending time.***

The most obvious way for a mayor to demonstrate personal commitment to CitiStat (or to anything) is to spend time on it—serious, consistent, repeated time.

Indeed, as with anything else in government—or in life—people will not accomplish very much if they do not commit their most valuable resource: time. Others will measure a mayor's commitment to CitiStat (or to anything else) by the level of resources that the mayor puts into it. And again, because everyone recognizes that a mayor's time is his or her scarcest resource,⁹ they will look to see how much time the mayor has invested in CitiStat.

Q: To what should a mayor commit his or her time?**A: *To participating in CitiStat meetings and to knowing key data.***

The most obvious way that a mayor can demonstrate commitment to CitiStat is to participate in the CitiStat meetings. A mayor may not be able to attend every single one. The inevitable crises require mayors to leave city hall to be on the scene. And any mayor has a host of other obligations and pressures. Nevertheless, if a mayor is to convince the city's agency directors and managers to take the CitiStat process seriously, he or she has to attend—and actively participate—in many of the meetings.

Eventually, a mayor can commission a key deputy to run the meetings. Indeed, if that authorization is unambiguous, the mayor need not even attend many meetings. Still, at the beginning, the mayor needs to be a participant. Moreover, the mayor needs to know the data—or, at least, some of the data. For whatever the performance targets the mayor cares about the most, he or she needs to know the data. Otherwise, everyone will quickly comprehend that the mayor doesn't really understand these targets, let alone care about them.

A mayor need not become a statistician. A mayor need not personally massage the data. Nevertheless, the mayor does need to demonstrate—repeatedly at every meeting with every agency—that he or she does understand what is going on, has some clear

expectations for the specific improvements, and can tell from the data whether the agency is making progress. The mayor has to be prepared to engage in an intelligent discussion about what can be learned from the data, about what can be learned from the agency's efforts and experience, and about the kinds of changes the agency and the mayor's office need to make to ratchet up to the next level of performance.

Later, a mayor can delegate the task of conducting the meeting to a deputy—signaling in some unambiguous way that this aide speaks for the mayor. Initially, however, if a mayor wants agency directors and managers, their staff, and their frontline workers to seriously work toward achieving specific performance targets, the mayor needs to dramatize that he or she is also working on them—and seriously too.

How Does a City Get Started?

Even if a city's mayor and its leadership team understand both Baltimore's overarching concept and its operational details, they will discover that it isn't obvious how to go from zero to a fully functional and effective CitiStat strategy. After all, for any new enterprise, getting started is a big challenge.

The Beginning

Q: How much equipment is needed to get started?

A: *Not much.*

Sure, it would be nice to have a fully equipped CitiStat room with the computers and the projectors and all of that fancy technology. It would certainly be nice to have hired a competent complement of analytical staff. And, obviously, it would be nice to have all of the data templates filled in with absolutely perfect data. If a mayor waits that long, however, he or she may no longer be mayor.

So rather than wait until all 10,000 ducks are lined up in a perfect row, just get started.

Q: What should a city do first?

A: *Start with what it has.*

In Baltimore, the CitiStat staff began by asking each agency to bring what data it already had. Not surprisingly, most agencies brought two kinds of data: financial data and personnel data. Most agencies were not really collecting performance data of any kind. For other administrative reasons, however, they were all collecting lots of data—particularly data about money and people. They collected financial data so that they could keep track of their budget and comply with various reporting requirements.

And they collected personnel data so that they could keep track of their staff and comply with various reporting requirements.

From these data, the CitiStat staff quickly figured out that Baltimore had a big overtime problem. Thus, it began focusing its initial analyses and meetings on the challenge of getting control of overtime.¹⁰

Each city will begin in its own way. It will begin with the data that are available and with the performance deficits that it considers most important or most amenable to some swift and significant improvements.

Like much else with the CitiStat performance strategy, where to begin is a judgment call. For example, a city may face a glaring performance deficit—one that is recognized by the mayor, by the responsible city agency (or agencies), by journalists, and by citizens. The mayor may conclude that no one will take CitiStat seriously if the mayor fails to attack this obvious problem. In the absence of such a conspicuous performance deficit, however, the mayor may have the luxury of choosing from a variety of significant if less visible problems. In this situation, the mayor might well choose to focus on a few smaller but easily corrected (if not eliminated) problems. Faced with skepticism inside and outside of city government, a mayor could elect to demonstrate some quick wins that can silence the critics and convince others to see the benefits of the CitiStat strategy.

Q: How much resistance will a city get—and from whom?

A: *Some active, mostly passive.*

Any new initiative in any large organization creates resistance. Some of this resistance comes from the

passive pessimists who conclude, “Why bother?” Some of this resistance comes from active malcontents who have become comfortable with their existing procedures and routines and see no reason to change; indeed, these individuals may be significantly inconvenienced by the new initiative.

The active malcontents will forcefully and publicly criticize the new initiative: “It won’t work.” “We tried it before.” “This new guy doesn’t understand how our organization works.” “We don’t have the money or the people or the equipment to do that.” They may even seek to sabotage the initiative with a strategy of malicious compliance: Do precisely what is requested, but be completely undiscerning in doing so.

The passive pessimists will go through the motions. They will do what is requested, without making any effort to undermine the enterprise. But they believe—actually “know”—that it won’t last. It won’t do any good and will be quickly abandoned. Or something else will come along—another brainstorm, another fad—and this one will vanish. “Why look stupid? Why commit to an enterprise that is bound to prove ephemeral? If you knew it would last—sure—it would be worth helping to make it a success; but long before it has a chance to be successful, it will disappear. So why bother?”

Q: What kinds of mistakes can a city make?

A: *All kinds of mistakes.*

No one pulls off a new initiative without making any mistakes. A mayor has to accept that a new CitiStat will not be any different. If the city tries to copy Baltimore’s approach precisely, it will make mistakes. No other city is precisely like Baltimore, and thus the details of what Baltimore did will be perfectly suited for no other city. If the city tries to copy Baltimore’s approach, it will make mistakes—for it will miss one or more important differences between it and Baltimore, or it will misinterpret the nature or magnitude of a key difference.

Consequently, at the beginning the mayor’s leadership team will have to manage the CitiStat process by groping along.¹¹ Some things will work. Some won’t. Thus, the mayor and the CitiStat staff will have to be consciously analyzing not only what worked and what didn’t, but also why. For only by

answering the “Why?” question will the city be able to learn from its successes and its mistakes.

Initial Progress

Q: How ambitious should a city be?

A: *Enough to create some obvious successes.*

One way to convert the passive pessimists into active adherents is to create some quick wins. The size of the wins is less important than that they be quick and obvious. Karl Weick of the University of Michigan has called this “the strategy of small wins.”¹² Don’t undertake to solve all of your problems at once. You can’t. So don’t try.

Instead, attempt to build upon a series of small successes, each one of which is an accomplishment by itself. At the same time, each small win also serves to convince others that the strategy is working and will continue to work in the future. Thus, the series of small wins gives confidence to committed supporters, converts some passive pessimists, and neutralizes the active malcontents. And each additional win—no matter how small—sends an unambiguous signal that this isn’t going away.

Q: How can a city get results quickly?

A: *By focusing on eliminating obvious, simple obstacles to improve performance.*

The quick wins will come by strategically selecting opportunities to eliminate annoyingly small yet clearly consequential barriers that are preventing city agencies from producing more or better results. Such a barrier could be obsolete rules that no one has felt authorized to change. It could be the lack of a key resource such as a piece of equipment or an individual with particular training. It could be the inability of two agencies to collaborate effectively to produce a common product.

Or it could simply be a lack of attention to the particular result that the mayor has now identified as being a core commitment of city government. After all, every city agency has multiple tasks—and for every existing task there exist some influential stakeholders who believe that their task is the most important in all of city government. Consequently, agency personnel are usually taught that every task,

every activity, every result is a top priority. City government has no low-priority jobs.

The consequence is that there are no priorities. No one can assert that one activity is more important or less important than another.

Still, a CitiStat performance strategy requires focus. It requires choices. Some things will be more important than others. Some results will be discussed at a CitiStat meeting; others won't. Some data will be distributed, analyzed, and debated; others won't. Some aspects of performance will warrant attention and resources; others won't.

Consequently, the mayor and the CitiStat staff need to focus on some specific aspects of performance that they want to improve. They need to choose.

And, at the beginning at least, they ought to choose opportunistically. They ought to choose aspects of performance for which they can easily obtain data and for which they can easily produce some significant improvements.

What Measures and Data Does a City Need?

Any mayor who chooses to employ a CitiStat strategy needs measures and data that focus attention on the results produced by city agencies that the mayor seeks to improve. Consequently, much of the work of CitiStat staff and agency managers involves the selection, analysis, interpretation, and revision of these indicators of performance.

The Measures

Q: How does a city know what to measure?

A: *It depends on what the mayor is trying to accomplish.*

As with every other choice about how to conceive and create, then implement and adjust a CitiStat leadership strategy, this decision also depends upon CitiStat's purpose. Architects operate by Louis Sullivan's important principle: "Form ever follows function."¹³ Architects can't make important decisions about the design of a building until they know what purpose the building will serve. Similarly, those who would design a CitiStat for a city need to start with their purpose. Only once the mayor has established in his or her own mind what CitiStat should strive to accomplish—and is able to clearly articulate this purpose to CitiStat staff and agency heads—can they begin to decide what they will measure.

Unfortunately, the measures that the mayor needs to accomplish the purposes underlying CitiStat may not be available. Maybe no one is measuring what the mayor needs measured. Maybe no one will ever be able to measure what the mayor needs measured. Maybe the mayor's CitiStat staff needs to start with whatever is currently being measured.

Still, given that the city will already be collecting a variety of miscellaneous data, the selection of measures should not be random. The collection of particular measures should be disciplined by the results that these measures will help the mayor, CitiStat staff, and agency directors, managers, and employees to improve.

Consequently, even if the initial search for measures imitates Baltimore's—"bring us what you've got"—the choice from among these available measures is not arbitrary. It should still be disciplined by the results that the mayor seeks to achieve. Once the CitiStat staff start hunting for measures that agencies are already employing, they may unearth a greater number and variety than they originally expected to find. After all, agencies may well have found it to be in their own internal, operating interest to measure certain aspects of their work; at the same time, these same agencies may have found it not to be in their own external, political interest to publicize the existence of these measures.

Thus, as with almost all of the other questions about CitiStat, the answer depends upon what the mayor seeks to accomplish. Like architects, public executives should always remember that form ever follows function.

Q: Who decides what to measure?

A: *All city employees and stakeholders can contribute.*

The mayor has a monopoly on deciding what CitiStat should seek to accomplish. At the same time, when formulating this objective, the mayor needs to listen to a variety of people. Like everyone else on the face of the planet, the mayor does not possess a monopoly on wisdom.¹⁴

Q: Why did Baltimore keep measuring the same things?**A: *Because they continued to be important.***

Producing results in city government is not a one-time project. It will not be completed by the end of the first—or second—fiscal year. It is an endless process of continuous, incremental improvement.

Indeed, even if a city agency has somehow miraculously managed to achieve optimum performance—in the eyes of the mayor, of all of the city councilors, of the voters, and of every journalist in the metropolitan region—the agency cannot simply hold a city-hall celebration to commemorate its championship. A city agency can't just have a career year, and cash in on its triumph. It has to repeat its successes again next year, and the year after that, and the year after that.

Citizens don't just care that the potholes are filled in FY 2008. They also want them filled in FY 2009 and FY 2019. The same applies to fixing sewer overflows or providing recreational services. Once a city jumps on the performance treadmill, it can't jump off.¹⁵

The Data**Q: What kind of data does a city really need?****A: *Data that helps to reveal how well the city is doing in achieving the mayor's objectives.***

For example, if a mayor is focused on filling potholes, the mayor (and the CitiStat staff) needs data on potholes. How many potholes were reported? How many potholes were filled? How quickly were they filled?

Moreover, the analytical staffers who work for CitiStat need to be able to disaggregate the data in various ways: by districts of the city, by crews in these districts, by time of day, by day of the week, by day and week of the year. They need to be able to use these data to calculate various summary statistics, such as the average time it takes to fill a pothole. They also need to be able to examine the distribution of the data. The average time to fill a pothole—say, less than two days—might be quite acceptable. Yet the upper tail of the distribution—how many potholes were not filled within, say, five

days—might be unacceptable. As for most analytic tasks, the CitiStat staff can learn the most from the data if they get it in its original, most unfiltered, disaggregated form.

Q: What kind of data does Baltimore actually use?**A: *All kinds of data including internal, administrative data, plus data on how city agencies responded to citizen requests for specific services.***

CitiStat utilizes a variety of standard administrative data (usually for two-week periods). For the Department of Transportation, such administrative data include parking citations issued, vehicles towed, and signs installed and repaired. For the Department of Recreation and Parks, these data include number of trees pruned, stumps removed, programs for school groups, and volunteer hours. For the Department of Housing and Community Development, these data include the housing code enforcement inspections (including the daily average by district and area). Such data and more can be found on the CitiStat website.¹⁶

CitiStat also utilizes a variety of personnel and financial data, such as overtime hours, unscheduled leave, and disciplinary actions; changes in fleet and equipment inventory; and, of course, expenditures in various categories (and against budget).

Finally, CitiStat utilizes a variety of output data driven by “service requests,” or “SRs,” from citizens. For example, how did the Department of Transportation do in responding to citizen requests to fill potholes? How many such SRs were received, and how quickly were they “closed,” that is, completed?

Other city agencies get other SRs. The Bureau of Water and Wastewater gets SRs for low water pressure. The Forestry Division of the Department of Recreation and Parks gets SRs for pruning the over 300,000 city-owned trees. The Department of Housing and Community Development gets SRs for investigating (and issuing violation notices and/or fines) for high grass or weeds on private property. The Health Department gets SRs for its Rat Rubout program.

Q: What kind of targets does Baltimore set?**A: *Specific completion targets for every type of service request.***

For each specific service request, the city has established a target time (measured in days) for how long it should take to close the SR. For example, Mayor O'Malley established the 48-hour pothole guarantee: If a citizen calls 311 to ask that a pothole be filled, he or she will be told that this service request will be completed in two days.

Examples of a few of the other service-request targets for other city agencies include:

- The Bureau of Water and Wastewater: sewer overflow, one day
- Bureau of Solid Waste: graffiti removal, seven days
- Health Department: dead animal pickup, three days
- Forestry Division: tree pruning, 300 days

Q: Where does Baltimore get its service-delivery data?**A: *From its 311 and CitiTrack systems.***

In March of 2002, Baltimore's 311 phone number—for all non-emergency calls for city services—and its CitiTrack data system were linked. Consequently, any citizen wishing to request a city service now dials just three digits: 311. A city operator takes the call, determines the type of service request, identifies the appropriate SR template, fills in the necessary information, and gives the citizen his or her service-request number along with the completion target. For this purpose, Baltimore's 311 Call Center has 12 workstations, which are staffed round the clock, receiving approximately 3,000 calls per day.¹⁷

The data from these service requests are entered into the CitiTrack database, which each city agency uses to follow up on its SRs. When it closes an SR, the agency also enters that data into the CitiTrack system. Consequently, this database provides the raw material that both agency and CitiStat staff can use to analyze what is happening with performance on particular service requests.

Q: How does a city ensure the integrity of the data?**A: *Audit it.***

Each agency closes its own SRs by entering this information into the CitiTrack system. Consequently, Baltimore has to check to be sure that the citizen's request for service has indeed been satisfied. It does this by randomly calling each week 100 citizens to see if they are satisfied with the city's work.

Q: What kinds of data are nice to have but are not essential?**A: *Data that are available because someone is collecting them but which are not obviously connected to the mayor's purposes.***

If the city has few potholes, if citizens are not complaining about how long it takes to fill a pothole, and, thus, if the mayor does not really care about potholes, data on how long it takes to fill a pothole are nice, but not particularly helpful. They may become helpful some day, when potholes become a meaningful issue (either because the city has a particularly bad winter or because a few vocal citizens have some neglected potholes near their residences).

At the same time, even if potholes are not at the top of the mayor's, the city council's, or the citizens' agenda, the mayor and the CitiStat staff may still wish to focus on the pothole data. Why? Because it may be that (despite the lack of political interest) the pothole-filling process can be easily and quickly improved significantly. This provides an opportunity to demonstrate some quick if small wins¹⁸ and to teach the managers and employees of other agencies that progress is, indeed, possible.

Q: Does CitiStat employ any qualitative data?**A: *Yes.***

Neither the mayor, the first deputy mayor, the director of CitiStat, nor the CitiStat staff are hunkered down in City Hall staring at their computer screens. They also live in the city. They observe city operations themselves. They hear from constituents. They read the newspapers and listen to the news. Consequently, when an agency fails to fulfill expectations—either a citizen's, a journalist's, or their own—they quickly seek to fix the mistake.

Moreover, they use the problem as an opportunity to learn whether there exists a more systemic, underlying difficulty that requires more analysis and follow-up. In addition, the CitiStat staff includes an investigator with responsibility for photographing (and re-photographing) egregious past failures, plus new and troubling concerns.

Indeed, often a CitiStat session will begin not with a discussion of the data for a particular SR, but with some questions about a recent newspaper story, or about a problem that someone on the mayor's leadership team has simply observed, or about a series of photographs that the investigator has taken.

Q: Can a city use outcome data or does it have to rely on output data?

A: *Rarely will a city have outcome data that is available sufficiently quickly to be used managerially to make operational improvements.*

The standard measurement mantra is: "Don't measure inputs. Don't measure processes. Don't measure activities. Don't measure outputs. Only measure outcomes." Unfortunately, in city government (indeed, in any government) this is often difficult. Sometimes it is impossible. Consequently, a CitiStat strategy may have to rely more on output data than on outcome data.

A government's output is what occurs at the agency's border. It is the streets cleaned, the children vaccinated, the criminals arrested, the restaurants inspected, the trees trimmed, the fires extinguished. All these are important activities of a city government. They are important, however, primarily because we believe that, in producing these outputs, the city is accomplishing important public purposes. We believe that, by producing these outputs, the city is creating public value.¹⁹ Still, the connection is rarely perfect.²⁰

- The health department could have inspected every restaurant twice in the past year. Still, the department might have failed to protect the city's citizens and visitors. The health department could have checked for the wrong diseases or the wrong unsanitary practices or it could have checked for the right problems but done this checking badly.

- The fire department could have arrived at every fire quickly, put out every fire efficiently, and rescued all endangered individuals safely. Still, the city's families and businesses could have suffered too much property damage from fires. The fire department may have failed to create a fire-prevention campaign that reduced the need to put out so many fires or rescue so many people.

For most city agencies, most of the available data will be output data—measures of what the agency does, measures of its outputs. Consequently, this may be the only place to start—with whatever output data are available. Moreover, what citizens may care most about is that city agencies do produce their required outputs. They may well care more that the potholes are filled quickly, efficiently, and permanently than whether the city's pothole-filling strategy has significantly reduced congestion. They may care more that broken tree branches are trimmed quickly (and the mess removed) than how high the city ranks on some organization's beautiful-city index. A mayor cannot devote too much time and energy to the outcomes until the city agencies are doing a good job producing their assigned outputs.

Still, outputs are not the definitive measure of a city agency's performance. How does a city know whether its streets are clean (the ultimate outcome about which citizens care) if it only measures tons collected (the output that the sanitation department produces)? It doesn't. Consequently, in addition to measuring how efficiently, effectively, and speedily the department picks up the city's trash, the mayor might seek outcome measures for the cleanliness of city streets.²¹

For a mayor seeking to create a CitiStat performance strategy, it makes sense to start with the available data. The city will, of course, have a lot of input data. It may have some output data, though the mayor's CitiStat staff may need to do some significant work to create useful and revealing output data. Only once the city has managed to create an assortment of productive output data should it move to the more challenging task of creating outcome data that are both meaningful and useful.

Who Has What Responsibilities?

Given the multiplicity of real, nitty-gritty operational responsibilities of any city government, given the challenge of getting anything done in government, and given the complexity of the CitiStat strategy, who needs to do what to ensure that performance does improve?

The Mayor

Q: What is the mayor's primary responsibility?

A: *To convince people that CitiStat is for real.*

In any government jurisdiction, the elected chief executive sets the tone. Whether it is the mayor, the county executive, the governor, or the president, people are always looking to this individual for clues. Does the mayor really care about this? Or is this something that the mayor is doing merely to appease some important constituency? Does the mayor really believe in this? Or will this soon disappear (just like all of those other mayoral initiatives) to be replaced by the next big thing? Does this mayor follow through? Or does this mayor jump capriciously from fad to vogue to trend to craze? Should I pay any attention to what the mayor is currently espousing? Or is it not worth my time?

For most people in government, the default assumption is obvious: This too will pass. After all, experienced public employees have accumulated significant empirical evidence to support this inference. Time after time, year after year, most of the "top priority" initiatives have possessed no more permanence than a Fourth of July fireworks display. They were dazzling wonders to watch. Yet they were soon gone, mostly remembered for how brilliantly, *and* briefly, they lit up the sky. Why should city employees or citizens think that this latest mayor's

latest whim—"What do they call it? CitiStat?"—will be any different?

Thus, any mayor who seeks to employ a CitiStat strategy to improve the performance of city agencies needs to convince the people who work for the city that this mayoral initiative is, indeed, for real. In fact, unless the mayor makes a conscious, committed, and consistent effort to do so, people will pay no more attention to CitiStat than they do any politician's BOMFOG oratory.²² They accept it as nice rhetoric but understand that it lacks any real operational significance.

Q: What can a mayor do to set the necessary tone?

A: *Invest personal prestige in CitiStat.*

What does a mayor take seriously? The things—activities, policies, endeavors, projects, initiatives, programs—in which the mayor has invested his or her reputation. If employees and citizens conclude that the mayor has staked his or her political, professional, and personal reputation in an undertaking, they will also take it seriously.

This creates a dilemma. Without investing personal prestige in a CitiStat strategy, a mayor cannot mobilize people to take it seriously. At the same time, by investing personal prestige in CitiStat, the mayor is gambling on its success. By not investing his or her reputation in CitiStat, a mayor is lowering the cost of failure. At the same time, however, by not investing his or her reputation in CitiStat, a mayor is also lowering its chances of success. As with any mayoral initiative, by increasing his or her personal investment in CitiStat, a mayor simultaneously improves both the probability of success and the costs of failure.

Q: How can a mayor invest personal prestige in CitiStat?

A: *By spending money, staff, and time.*

Elected chief executives have numerous ways to demonstrate that they are serious about an initiative. The two most obvious are to spend money and to spend time. Both money and time are very scarce commodities. Thus, people will watch to see how the mayor invests them.

On what does a mayor spend money? Any new mayor faces a budget deficit. It is a law of urban government; no mayor leaves a successor with a budget surplus.²³ Still, CitiStat does not have to cost that much. Sure, there is the initial capital cost of the room and the technology, plus the ongoing operating cost for the staff. Compared with the public-works budget, however, CitiStat is cheap.

Nevertheless, people will be checking on what financial resources the mayor invests in CitiStat. Does the mayor convert an existing city-hall room into the official CitiStat room? Or are CitiStat meetings conducted in some undisclosed location away from city hall?²⁴ Does the mayor invest in the technology to conduct the meetings—and the technology that the CitiStat analysts need to do their work? Or do the people with responsibility for collecting, analyzing, and displaying CitiStat data have to scavenge for computer hand-me-downs? Does the mayor invest in a talented staff of CitiStat analysts? Or does the mayor give these CitiStat tasks to people who already have multiple, much-higher-priority assignments?²⁵

Indeed, on what does the mayor spend talented staff? Mayors can attract ambitious, talented people who believe that they can make a difference—and their reputation—in city government. At the same time, the supply of such people—people with the capacity and willingness to make a difference in city government—is not unlimited. A mayor can seek to recruit more of these people. At the same time, a mayor has to decide what assignments to give the city's top recruits. Again, people will be watching. If the mayor recruits people with real analytical talent and assigns them to the CitiStat office, everyone will notice. If the mayor doesn't even bother to attempt to attract analytical talent, or if the mayor assigns all the people with analytical skills to, say, the budget shop (and not CitiStat), everyone will

get the message. If the mayor delegates the task of running the CitiStat meetings to a junior aide, everyone will get the message. Mayors spend staff just like they spend money, and people watch to see on what priorities a mayor is spending the best staff.

Mayors also spend time—their time, their most valuable commodity. And again, people are watching: On what does the mayor spend time? Is the mayor spending time on CitiStat? If so, the mayor must be serious about it—deluded, maybe, but, nevertheless, undeniably serious. Thus, even if city employees believe that the mayor is naive about the prospects for producing results in city government, even if they believe that, CitiStat or no CitiStat, city government will never improve performance, they will still take note of the mayor's willingness to spend time on CitiStat.

Q: What does the mayor not need to do?

A: *Attend every meeting.*

If a mayor faithfully attends every CitiStat meeting, people will quickly get the message. If the mayor is always in a room, a lot of other people will want to be in that room. Not everyone, of course; all those city employees who prefer to remain anonymous will want not to be in that room. And, if the mayor is asking pointed questions about agency performance (or is merely present while others ask such questions), the number of people who would prefer not to be in the room will increase. Nevertheless, if the mayor is frequently attending the meetings, people will get the message: The mayor is serious about CitiStat.

Unfortunately, mayors are human. Like the rest of us, they too have only 168 hours in their week. Moreover, all mayors have a multitude of responsibilities—the numerous things that they want to do, plus the even more numerous obligations that other people (always very important people) expect them to fulfill. Mayors must attend meetings, deliver remarks at portentous events, lobby state legislators, listen attentively to impassioned lectures, massage city-council egos, smile for photographs, hold neighborhood outreach sessions, shake hands with visiting dignitaries, visit schools and toss students' hair, and cut pretty ribbons. Oh, yes: And most mayors also have a family.

All mayoral schedules require compromises. Consequently, no mayor can attend every meeting.

No mayor should expect to attend every CitiStat session. Even if a mayor initially believes that he or she will be able to attend every CitiStat session, this promise will quickly be compromised.

Fortunately, a mayor need not attend every meeting—or even half the meetings. After all, a key virtue of CitiStat—a necessary attribute that is often missed by those who visit Baltimore for a morning²⁶—is the continuity of the issues discussed at the meetings. The most important aspects of a city agency's performance are examined repeatedly—at meeting, after meeting, after meeting ... after meeting.

A mayor who cannot attend every meeting cannot personally provide this continuity.

Q: What does the mayor have to do?

A: Confer authority.

A mayor cannot chair every CitiStat meeting. But someone must. The responsibility for conducting the meeting cannot be randomly rotated among miscellaneous members of the mayor's staff. It cannot be left to a third-level subordinate. If the CitiStat meetings—and thus the entire CitiStat strategy—are to have any impact on the behavior of city employees, these meetings must be chaired by a single individual upon whom the mayor has conferred significant status.

The purpose of a CitiStat meeting—or, more appropriately, the purpose of a *series* of CitiStat meetings—is to focus the energies of city employees on fixing their key performance deficits.²⁷ This, however, will not happen after one meeting. It will take a series of meetings, months of meetings, perhaps years of meetings. Moreover, this will not happen if each meeting examines a new performance problem. If CitiStat meetings are to have an impact, they must continuously and consistently examine a core set of performance challenges: tracking the data, observing both advances and setbacks, debating alternative approaches, motivating people to experiment with new tactics, learning from both failures and successes, and keeping people focused on the results to be produced and improved.

One individual has to provide this consistent continuity. And the mayor needs to make it clear exactly who this individual is. It might be the mayor's chief of staff. It might be the deputy mayor for operations.

It might be the director of the department of management. It might be the director of CitiStat. The formal title this person holds is less important than his or her informal but authoritative status.

The mayor may well enter office accompanied by this individual. He or she may have been the campaign manager, law partner, college roommate—someone whom the press has already publicly identified as the mayor's alter ego. When Martin O'Malley became mayor of Baltimore, his first appointment was Michael Enright as first deputy mayor. Everyone knew (or quickly figured out) that Enright spoke for the mayor.

In other circumstances, the mayor will need to make this delegation of authority visible and explicit. The mayor can do this by attending many of the initial CitiStat meetings and frequently and explicitly ratifying with appropriate words and strategic silence the probing, suggestions, and directives of the individual who will also run the meetings in the mayor's absence.

Finally, of course, the mayor will need to quickly and clearly strike down the first threat (subtle or direct) to this individual's authority. When the first agency head seeks to appeal an instruction issued at a CitiStat session, the mayor needs to squelch it quickly. Otherwise, everything that happens at future CitiStat sessions will be either ignored or open to appeal.

To ensure that CitiStat is effective, the one thing that a mayor has to do is to endow the individual(s) who will run the meetings and the staff who will do the analyses with the authority they need to do their jobs.

The CitiStat Staff

Q: What kind of staff does it take to make CitiStat work?

A: A smart, dedicated, hardworking staff.

The skills needed by CitiStat staffers are the same as those required by any city employee with significant responsibilities. CitiStat staffers must be dedicated, willing to work long hours for significantly less pay than they could make in the private sector. CitiStat staffers must be smart—smart along a variety of dimensions. They must be analytically smart,

comfortable with numbers, and able to tease out interesting trends, problems, and opportunities from the available data. At the same time, they must be politically and organizationally smart. They must be able to present and explain their data in a manner that does not gratuitously offend the personal or professional competence of the agency's director and key managers. If CitiStat staffers can explain their work clearly and cooperatively but can offer only shallow analyses, they contribute little to the performance of city agencies. If these staffers are brilliant analysts of the data but present their conclusions condescendingly, they will undermine the mayor's efforts to convince city agencies to focus on results.

Most public-sector jobs require multiple intelligences.²⁸ The job of the CitiStat staffer is no different.

Q: What exactly does the CitiStat staff do?

A: *Identify performance deficits and suggest strategies for improvement.*

The first task of the CitiStat staff is to look at the data. From whatever data are available, the staff needs to figure out what is working and what isn't. The task here is to identify the city's performance deficits—results being produced by city agencies that are, in some way, inadequate.

This requires a comparison. It may be the comparison of the city's data with similar data from other similar municipalities. It may be the comparison of the data for one city unit with the data for another similar unit. It may be the comparison of the data for one city agency with some ideal—an ideal expressed in a general mayoral aspiration or in a specific performance target. Whenever the CitiStat staff reaches any conclusion about the performance of a city agency—positive or negative—they do so based on some kind of comparison.

Sometimes these conclusions will be drawn from aggregate data: How many potholes did citizens report last month? How many did the city fill within its target time of 48 hours? And what was the average time it took for the city to fill a pothole? Such data provide a picture of an agency's city-wide performance.

Often, however, useful conclusions can be drawn only from disaggregated data. How did the pothole

crew in district one do compared with the pothole crew from district six? Were potholes reported on Wednesday morning filled more quickly—or less quickly—than those reported on Saturday morning? Were potholes reported on Monday morning less likely to be filled quickly—and, if so, was that because of the backlog of potholes reported over the weekend (when citizens had more time to report them and fewer crews were working) or because Monday is traditionally a low-productivity day in the street maintenance division?

This simple example suggests the uncertainty in analyzing disaggregated data. First, in what ways should the analysts disaggregate the data? By geography? By organizational subunits? By time? In the search for something revealing, the analysts don't necessarily know along what dimension to disaggregate the data. Mostly analysts guess, using either past experience with the data or an educated hunch. But until the analysts actually do the disaggregation for the first time, they won't learn whether their work will uncover anything unusual.

Moreover, even if the analysts do discover something unusual in the data—something that suggests they might learn something from their disaggregated data—they may not immediately understand what the data are revealing. Does the difference between the crews in district one and district six reflect differences in their workplace dedication, in their operational competence, in their crew supervisors, or in their organizational intelligence? Or is the difference due to the conditions under which they work? Or is the difference purely random, likely to disappear in next month's data?²⁹

Finally, once the analysts have learned something significant from the data, they need to figure out what to do about it. What might they recommend? Should they suggest that the district-six crew reorganize its work to reflect the superior tactics of the district-one crew? Or should the crew supervisor in district six be replaced? Or can the lower productivity of the district-six crew be fixed with some simple on-the-job mentoring for its supervisor?

The data do not answer these questions. Consequently, these kinds of questions—both what are the conclusions to be drawn from the differences in the data and what kind of remedial action (if any)

should be taken—need to be discussed with the agency director at the next CitiStat meeting.

Q: How many CitiStat staff does a mayor need?

A: *Not many.*

The size of the CitiStat staff depends upon size of the city and the ambition of the mayor. If the mayor of a large city (say, with a population of half-a-million people, and hundreds of propagating potholes) wants to use CitiStat to really improve performance, he or she will need several analysts in the CitiStat office. Yet Baltimore (with a population of 640,000) has only a director, half-a-dozen analytic staff, and an investigator.

Like city government itself, Baltimore's CitiStat staff is organized around city agencies. Each of its analysts is assigned to cover several of these agencies, and they become very familiar with their agencies' data, operations, and key managers. Given the two-week cycle of the CitiStat meetings, each analyst usually covers just two agencies, preparing each week for one CitiStat meeting for one agency.³⁰ In addition, the investigator roams the city looking for trouble spots, often photographing them for display at a future CitiStat session.

Still, the minimal number of CitiStat staff is probably two. Why? Because if the CitiStat office contains only one person, he or she will have no one with whom to talk. No one with whom to check and debate ideas. No one with whom to commiserate. No one to help get out of a demoralizing rut or with whom to celebrate a small yet meaningful success. Everyone needs colleagues. CitiStat staff are no different.

Q: How does the mayor select the CitiStat staff?

A: *By trial and error.*

Given the multiple talents required of any CitiStat staffer, it is not always easy to determine whether an applicant will be successful in the job. Thus, as with many public-sector jobs, the only way to discover if an individual can do it is to let him or her try. Some applicants will prove successful. Some won't.

Nevertheless, it makes sense to select people with a set of basic analytical skills combined with some people skills and then help them grow into the job.

An applicant need not have high-level econometric training; CitiStat staffers run few regressions. But CitiStat staff do have to be comfortable with numbers—able to look at data, uncover trends, and tease out revealing pieces of information. And they do have to be able to present their conclusions in a respectful and convincing manner.

Q: How does a mayor attract CitiStat staff?

A: *By promising them the opportunity to have an impact.*

A mayor can make CitiStat hot. By committing city government to producing real results, and by making CitiStat a key element of this performance strategy, a mayor can make joining the CitiStat staff both an exciting adventure and an intelligent career move. Young analysts just out of graduate school will be attracted by the opportunity to have an impact on government's performance that working on CitiStat offers.

This is, of course, the same strategy that the mayor will employ to recruit the director of any city agency. But the pool of talent from which agency directors and CitiStat staffers are recruited may be quite different. Agency directors need managerial experience. CitiStat staffers need analytical expertise. Both will be attracted to work for a mayor who is using CitiStat to make a difference.

Q: Where is the CitiStat staff located, organizationally, within city government?

A: *In the mayor's office.*

For the CitiStat performance strategy to prove effective in motivating the agencies to focus their energy and intelligence on improving performance, the staff need to be seen by everyone working in city government as a direct extension of the mayor. Consequently, the director of CitiStat needs to report directly to the mayor. Or, if the CitiStat director is not the individual on whom the mayor has conferred the authority to conduct the CitiStat meetings, the CitiStat director should, at least, report to this individual.

Baltimore also emphasizes where CitiStat should *not* be organizationally located. CitiStat should *not* be part of the budget bureau. If it is, the people in Baltimore

believe, the definition of performance will soon morph into: How much money did we save? Cost is not irrelevant in Baltimore, and it is not irrelevant for Baltimore's CitiStat. Nevertheless, in Baltimore—unlike so many other governmental jurisdictions—expenditures are not the sole measure of performance.

The Agency Director and Managers

Q: What is the agency director's responsibility?

A: To produce real results.

Given that the purpose of CitiStat is to ensure that city government—and thus city agencies—produce results that citizens value, the primary responsibility of the manager of each city agency is to produce those results.

But what results? Whose results? The manager of any public agency receives multiple and conflicting instructions about what results to produce. The agency's authorizing legislation is simultaneously vague and contradictory. The pressures from members of the city council, organized constituency groups, journalists, and individual citizens come with the same ambiguity and tensions.

Given this reality, some agency managers may view CitiStat as a blessing, because CitiStat eliminates that ambiguity. The CitiStat process provides an agency director with a clear understanding of the specific results on which the agency should concentrate. CitiStat may not eliminate all of the tensions. Not every stakeholder will share the mayor's priorities. Nevertheless, by providing an agency with a clear definition of the results that are of the highest priority, CitiStat implicitly designates the other remaining results as lower priority. CitiStat provides the director, managers, and employees of each city agency with a focus for their work.

Q: What is the job of an agency's director and managers at a CitiStat meeting?

A: To answer questions, to explain existing approaches, and to offer new ideas.

A CitiStat meeting centers around a series of questions asked by the mayor's staff to which the agency director and managers need to respond. These questions come in several basic forms:

- This aspect of performance, as captured by these service-request data, is slipping or has not improved as fast as we would like. What has your agency done about this?
- The other week (month, quarter, year) we agreed on the need to employ this particular approach. What has your agency done to implement it?
- We've noticed this really big problem. What is your organization doing about it?

That is, the questions focus on some improvement that the agency needs to make.

Agency directors and managers need to respond to such questions in four ways:

1. They need to provide straightforward, factual information. What happened? When? How? Why? (Note: Denying the existence of the problem is not a politic rebuttal.)
2. They need to explain what the organization has done so far to mitigate the problem. Who did what when? What happened? (Note: Reporting that no effort has been made to deal with the problem is not a prudent reply.)
3. They need to explain what they have so far learned from these efforts. What worked? What didn't? Why? (Note: Disclosing that nothing has been learned from any effort to fix the problem is not an astute response.)
4. If they are not convinced that they have satisfactorily mitigated the problem, the agency director needs to outline a new approach to fixing it. What might work? Why? When will it be implemented? How much will it cost? When can improvements be anticipated? (Note: Revealing that no thought has been given to a new approach is not an advisable reaction.)

At a CitiStat meeting in Baltimore (as at a CompStat meeting in New York City³¹), an agency director or manager is responsible not so much for a specific outcome but for having an intimate working knowledge of the agency's performance deficits and some well-thought-out strategies for fixing them.

Q: How do agency directors prepare for a CitiStat meeting?**A: *By conducting their own internal AgencyStat session.***

When Baltimore launched CitiStat, agency directors came to their biweekly meetings unprepared. They quickly learned, however, that they needed to get themselves ready to answer the inevitable questions. So the day before, they started getting together with their own managers, a meeting that quickly morphed into an internal "AgencyStat." Initially, these meetings were like debate preparation: "What are our data saying? What questions will I be asked? What is my best answer?" But eventually, as agency directors began to appreciate how the CitiStat strategy could improve performance, they began to use their AgencyStat sessions to manage their own organization. In Baltimore, AgencyStat sessions are not just designed to get ready for tomorrow's meeting. Instead, agency directors use them to improve performance so that they won't have to sweat so much about a future meeting, three or six months in the future.

What Kind of Infrastructure Does a City Need?

CitiStat may be a leadership strategy. Nevertheless, the implementation of this leadership strategy takes place within a specific operational framework. It takes place in a room, depends upon some specific forms of technology, and (as always) needs a budget.

The Room

Q: What are the key characteristics of the CitiStat room?

A: *Chairs, tables, and a podium.*³²

The most obvious feature of Baltimore's CitiStat room is the podium. Behind this podium (see Figure 1 on page 26) stands the director of the agency whose performance is being discussed. Occasionally, the first deputy mayor or the agency director will call other agency managers to the podium.

This podium is not essential. A CitiStat session could be conducted with everyone sitting around a large conference table or in a variety of other settings.

Nevertheless, the podium does possess symbolic significance. The individual at the podium is the only one in the room who is standing. Everyone else in the room is focused (both visually and mentally) on this person. (Or persons; sometimes two or maybe three people are standing behind the podium.) Thus, the podium dramatizes who is responsible—who is responsible both for answering the specific question now being discussed and for the general overall operation of the broader issue of performance being examined.

Sitting at a table facing the podium are four chairs. One is for Mayor O'Malley, who during the second half of his seven-year tenure rarely participated in



Photo courtesy of the City of Baltimore.

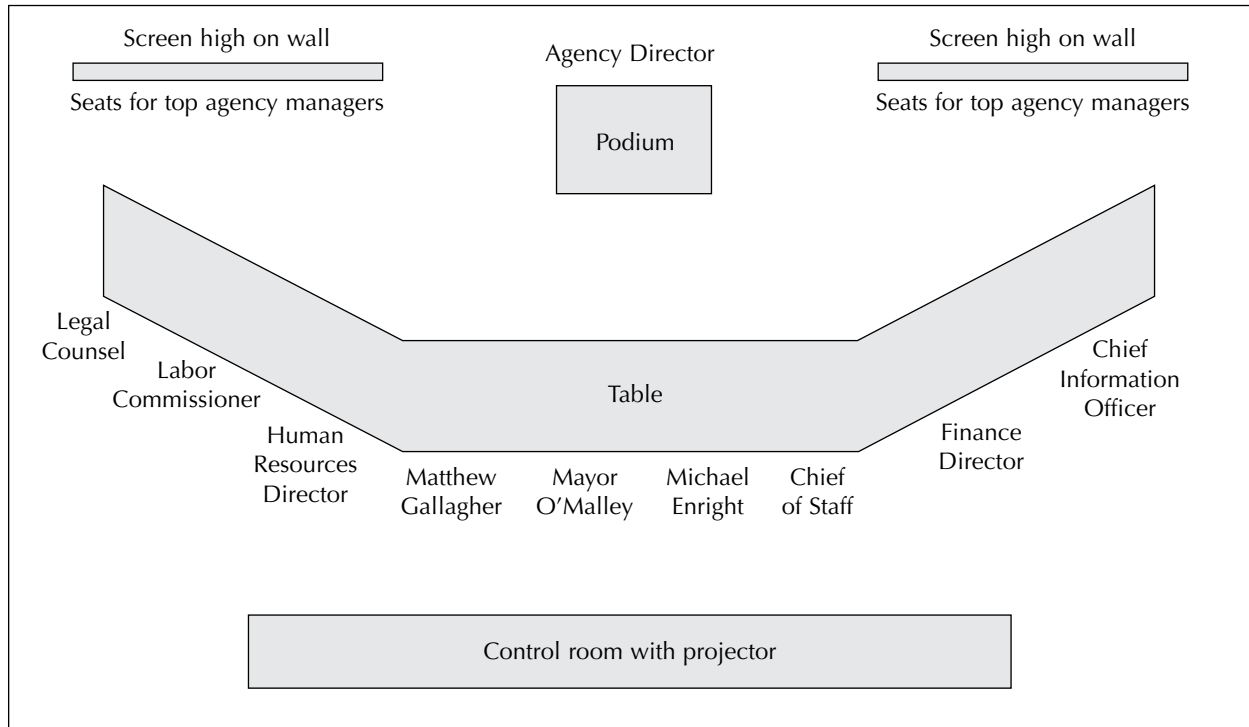
Mayor Sheila Dixon conferring with Philadelphia Democratic Party mayoral primary winner, Michael Nutter, on June 22, 2007, during a CitiStat meeting.

CitiStat meetings. Michael Enright, the first deputy mayor, was, however, a permanent fixture at most CitiStat meetings and usually led the discussion. Similarly, Matthew Gallagher, the director of CitiStat, participated in almost every meeting (and took the lead when Enright could not). The mayor's chief of staff rarely attended and rarely participated when he did.

Sitting on the two wings of this table were the directors of the city's key support units:

- The Department of Finance was usually represented by its deputy director, Helene Grady.
- The Mayor's Office of Information and Technology was represented by the city's chief information officer, Elliot H. Schlanger, who almost always attended the meetings.
- The Department of Human Resources was represented by a variety of different people.
- The Office of the Labor Commissioner was usually represented by Commissioner Sean Malone.

Figure 1: A Rough Schematic of Baltimore's CitiStat Room During the O'Malley Administration



- The mayor's Law Department was usually represented by the legal counsel, Ralph S. Tyler.

Under each of the two screens on the wall were half-a-dozen seats for the top deputies of the agency. Both on the left side and the right side of the room were another two dozen chairs for more officials from the agency as well as for the usual collection of out-of-town visitors. In a bench in front of the control room sat the CitiStat analyst for the agency. And in the control room were another two CitiStat staffers who projected the various maps, charts, and data on the screens.

The Technology

Q: What kind of technology does a city need?

A: Enough so that the city can collect, analyze, and display data about results.

Over time, Baltimore's technology has become more sophisticated. In the beginning, however, it was not particularly polished. As its initial search for data was pragmatic and opportunistic, so was its choice of technology. It began with what was available.

Today, Baltimore's CitiStat relies on four types of technology: (1) the 311 phone system, (2) the CitiTrack data system, (3) spreadsheet templates and analytical frameworks for analyzing data, and (4) computers and projectors that display the maps, charts, and data during a meeting.

Given that the objective of CitiStat is to improve the performance of city agencies, it needs data about this performance: What specific results is a specific agency supposed to produce? Until this question is answered, it is impossible to decide what data to collect and analyze, let alone what technology is needed to facilitate these tasks.

In Baltimore, Mayor O'Malley chose to focus on the delivery of city services. In particular, he chose to focus on the time it took for a city agency to satisfactorily respond to a citizen's request for a specific service. How long did it take to fill a pothole? To trim a tree? To get water out of a residential basement? If this is the kind of results that the mayor wants to produce, the city needs to be able to measure the relevant agency's performance. Consequently, Baltimore specified 250 different kinds of "service requests," or SRs, that citizens could make from city government.

Q: What is the 311 City Call system?**A: *A single centralized method for citizens to request services from the city.***

In addition to CitiStat, Baltimore created its 311 City Call system (an innovation pioneered by Chicago). A citizen who wants a city agency to do something no longer has to figure out what agency that is and what the phone number for that agency is. Nor does the citizen need to resort to calling 911 with the pretext that the request is an emergency. Instead, the citizen just dials a single number—311—for all such requests. Like a lot of other cities with a 311 number, Baltimore refers to this as “one call to city hall.”

Baltimore's 311 call center contains 12 workstations and has a staff of 30 trained customer service agents. These agents employ 250 different templates on which they record the details of the 250 different types of service request. There is the SR template for a pothole, a different one for a tree trim, and still another for water in a basement. Citizens can also make a 311 service request online.³³

Q: What is CitiTrack?**A: *A customer relationship management system for keeping track of citizen requests for service and their fulfillment.***

The analysis conducted by the CitiStat staff requires data. Consequently, Baltimore needs a mechanism—a database—that can be used to collect and compare data. CitiTrack is that database.

Baltimore stores the details on each of these SRs using yet another technology—the CitiTrack system. Modeled after customer relationship management (CRM) systems in the private sector, CitiTrack records the details of all service requests made to the 311 system (either over the phone or online) including when these tasks were completed. Originally, this CRM software was developed by Motorola in cooperation with Baltimore; it can now be purchased off-the-shelf from Motorola.³⁴

Any analysis of performance requires an agreement about exactly what data is required. This, in turn, requires an agreement about the exact nature of performance that needs to be improved. Until those issues are addressed, it makes little sense to create a new database. In Baltimore, because the mayor

chose to define performance as improvement in city services, the CitiTrack database collects information on how well different city agencies are doing on this mayoral dimension of performance.

Q: What are the data templates that Baltimore employs?**A: *Excel spreadsheets.***

When Baltimore created CitiStat in 2000, it also created data templates using Excel spreadsheets. Since then, the CitiStat staff has occasionally updated the spreadsheets to provide additional data or analysis.

Many of these data templates can be seen on the CitiStat website (in PDF format).³⁵ When Baltimore receives a request from another jurisdiction, it has been willing to send a sample to others.

Q: Where does Baltimore obtain the special equipment it uses?**A: *Off the shelf.***

Baltimore has obtained the various components of the information technology that it uses for CitiStat strictly from standard sources. None of Baltimore's equipment is proprietary. The computers in Baltimore's CitiStat offices are no different from those in any other city hall.

The Budget**Q: How much did it cost to create CitiStat?****A: *\$20,000.***

The initial setup cost for CitiStat—for the room and the information technology—was just \$20,000. Most of this went for the information technology. The facilities—the room in which the CitiStat meetings are held and the offices in which the CitiStat staff work—were created from underutilized parts of City Hall. Consequently, the start-up funds that were not spent on technology went for sheetrock, tables, and chairs.

Q: What is the annual operating cost of CitiStat?**A: *Half-a-million dollars per year.***

For FY 2007, the operating budget for Baltimore's CitiStat was \$509,000. All but \$6,000 of this was for salaries and benefits.

Q: To what component of the city's budget is CitiStat assigned?**A: *The mayor's budget.***

CitiStat is a unit within the mayor's office. Consequently, the CitiStat operating budget is part of the mayor's operating budget.

Q: How much does the 311 Call System and CitiTrack cost?**A: *\$2.5 million in initial capital costs and \$4.6 million per year in operating costs.***

The capital costs included \$2 million for Motorola's customer relationship management system, and another \$500,000 for the city's Call Center.

Q: How does CitiStat influence the budget process?**A: *Indirectly.***

Once a month, an agency's CitiStat meeting will begin with a budget update and an examination of specific funds: Why is this running over budget? Why is it running under? Then, once a year, CitiStat conducts a detailed review of each agency's budget.

Of course, CitiStat analyses and discussion have a lot of subtle influences on other aspects of the city's operations, everything from budget to procurement to human resources. CitiStat identifies difficulties that need to be resolved, and with people from the agency and mayor's support offices in the room, these can be worked out on the spot. Moreover, the reputation for competence and cooperation that an agency, its director, and its managers establish over many CitiStat sessions affects their working relationships with other agencies, not just the budget office.

Q: Should the CitiStat office be part of the budget department?**A: *No.***

Baltimore emphasizes that if CitiStat is run out of a city's budget office, the sole measure of concern will quickly become dollars saved.

The budget office has one set of purposes: to create the mayor's annual budget proposal; to ensure that the city's expenditures are consistent with its sources

of revenue; to ensure that all funds are spent exactly as appropriated; to ensure that the city does not overspend its budget. For a city budget office, spending less is always good.³⁶ The budget office would, inevitably, want to get the *same* bang for *fewer* bucks. The budget office might be even happier with a *smaller* bang for *fewer* bucks.

In contrast, the CitiStat office has a different set of purposes. Primarily, the CitiStat office wants to improve the results produced by city agencies. Like every other unit within city government, it is constrained in what it can accomplish by the restrictions contained in the budget. Working within these constraints, the CitiStat office seeks ways to produce more or better results. The staff of CitiStat or an agency may, however, obtain some inter-budget-item flexibility if they can make the argument to the first deputy mayor that such flexibility will permit an agency to improve performance. Then, using that flexibility, the agency will need to develop a new strategy exploiting this flexibility and to report back the resulting improvements. For whatever bucks are available, Baltimore's CitiStat staff is always looking for a bigger and better bang.

What Is the Purpose, Operation, and Impact of the Meetings?

The most visible feature of CitiStat is the meeting. Mayors and others who visit Baltimore to learn about CitiStat spend most of their time observing a meeting. And although CitiStat is more than a series of meetings, these meetings are, in fact, central to the strategy.

The Participants in the Meeting

Q: Who attends the meeting?

A: *Several dozen people from the agency and the mayor's office.*

A CitiStat meeting is a deliberation that involves the management team from a city agency and key personnel from the mayor's office.

Inevitably, the agency is represented by the director, who stands at the podium; 10 to 12 of the director's key deputies, who sit under the two screens; and another dozen or so middle managers, who sit on the wings. Every one of these individuals can be called upon—either by the mayor's staff or by the agency director—to answer questions about some aspects of his or her specific responsibilities. Some of the deputies may be repeatedly called upon session after session; others may need to respond only two or three times a year.

Yet, even if agency middle managers rarely need to answer a question, they profit from the session. Kimberly Flowers, who served on the CitiStat staff before she became director of the city's Department of Parks and Recreation, noted that she brought her agency's top two-dozen officials to her CitiStat sessions because she wanted each of them to understand the mayor's agenda and to appreciate the specific results-focused expectations that the mayor and his staff had for the agency.

Q: Who attends from the mayor's office?

A: *About a dozen key mayoral appointees.*

During the O'Malley administration, the attendees from the mayor's office typically included:

- Michael Enright, the first deputy mayor, who conducted the meeting
- Matthew Gallagher, the director of CitiStat (who conducted the meeting if Enright was unable to attend)
- The CitiStat analyst responsible for the agency at the session
- One or two additional data analysts from the CitiStat staff, who were responsible for projecting the proper graphics onto the wall
- A representative from the Department of Finance, usually the deputy director, Helene Grady
- Elliot H. Schlanger, the city's chief information officer and the head of the Mayor's Office of Information and Technology
- A representative of the city's Department of Human Resources
- Sean Malone, the commissioner of labor
- Ralph S. Tyler, the mayor's legal counsel and head of the city's Law Department

Q: Who does *not* attend the meeting?

A: *Journalists, stakeholders, and citizens.*

CitiStat is an internal management meeting—the mechanism that the mayor uses to run city government. Consequently, participation is limited to those with direct operational responsibilities for the

specific agency under discussion.³⁷ (Occasionally, journalists have attended a CitiStat meeting, but they do this to write a feature story, not to provide ongoing coverage.)

Q: Do union officials attend the meeting?

A: No.

Mayor O'Malley's position was that CitiStat is an internal management meeting. If a union would let someone from the mayor's office attend its internal meetings, asserted O'Malley, then he would permit the union to attend CitiStat.

In reality, of course, no CitiStat meeting is completely confidential. After all, in the room there would usually be a union member and probably someone who was close to the union's leadership. Consequently, after the meeting ended, the union would quickly learn what was discussed and decided.

The Conduct of the Meetings

Q: How frequently does an agency attend a CitiStat meeting?

A: Every two weeks.

The CitiStat cycle is religiously regular. If an agency is scheduled to appear this week at 1:00 on Thursday afternoon, it will also appear at 1:00 on Thursday afternoon two weeks later and every two weeks thereafter. If an agency is scheduled to appear next week at 8:30 on Friday morning, it will also appear at 8:30 on Friday morning two weeks later and every two weeks thereafter. With the exception of official holidays, nothing interrupts this timetable.

Of course, this means that each week the mayor's staff attends multiple CitiStat meetings—at a minimum four, sometimes as many as eight. Obviously, this is a significant commitment of one of the city's most valuable resources: the time of the mayor's key staff.

At the same time, CitiStat is how the mayor and his staff run the city. They devote so much time to conducting and participating in these meetings, and so much time analyzing the data and preparing for these meetings, precisely because this is how they learn what is going on within the various city agencies; how they track performance improvements; how they identify problems; how they learn what is

working and what isn't; how they track the effectiveness of the ideas, adjustments, and solutions that they have implemented; how they establish who in each agency is competent and who isn't; how they reward significant accomplishments; and how they drive home their unhappiness with inadequate results.

Q: How many CitiStat sessions does Baltimore conduct?

A: Over half-a-dozen a week; several dozen in a month.

Some sessions—specifically PoliceStat and SchoolStat—are held every week. CitiStat sessions for most city departments are held on a two-week cycle; these include: Fire, General Services, Health, Housing, Solid Waste, Recreation and Parks, Transportation, and Water and Wastewater. In addition, Baltimore has held (biweekly or monthly) CitiStat sessions for Capital Program Management, Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women's Business Enterprise (WBE), Finance, Homeless Services, Information and Technology.

Q: Who sets the agenda for each meeting?

A: The first deputy mayor, the director of CitiStat, and the agency's CitiStat analyst—and the agency, too.

For every agency in Baltimore, the agenda for its upcoming CitiStat meeting is hardly secret. It is set by the performance targets specified in the turn-around time for the agency's service requests, or SRs—particularly the agency's priority service requests. And it is set by the discussion at the previous CitiStat session as well as the follow-up memo that the assigned CitiStat analyst sent to the agency after that session. And it is set by new developments that emerged during the previous 14 days, such as a newspaper article.

Moreover, the agency has access to the same data that the CitiStat staff is using. So agency managers can easily predict the issues on which the CitiStat staff will focus. Indeed, because the agency has appeared at a CitiStat meeting only two weeks before, and because the CitiStat staff has followed up with a memo immediately after that meeting, and because the mayor's focus is not spasmodic but doggedly consistent, an agency's director and

managers should have little difficulty predicting the menu of questions that they will be asked. Consequently, the agency can prepare itself to respond to questions about its performance on various SRs, particularly its priority SRs.

Of course, the agency might have been subjected to some media attention during the previous two weeks that could raise new questions. But the agency will know about any such issues and prepare for them, too.

Agency managers should be surprised by only one kind of problem. CitiStat staff—and particularly its investigator—are always traveling around the city. So are the mayor, first deputy mayor, and other members of the mayor's staff. And they are vigilant, always on the alert for problems. And although agency managers may well be doing the same thing, they might not observe (or recognize) the same problems.

Thus, in reality, the agenda for any CitiStat meeting is set by the performance of the agency.

Still, the mayor's staff cannot examine all of the possible issues during an hour-and-a-half CitiStat session. They have to make some choices.

The first choice is made by the CitiStat analyst, who the day before the meeting prepares a memo (usually about a dozen pages) to the first deputy mayor and CitiStat director (but not the agency) outlining the key issues and suggesting how much time should be spent on each. Then, in a brief discussion in the office of the CitiStat director (just down the hall from the CitiStat room), the three of them go over the issues, identifying the ones that they need to cover.

Of course, the actual flow of the session never quite follows this plan. Some topics take less time than originally allotted. More often, the discussion becomes stuck on a significant issue. This may be because the problem is complex and thus requires time for the mayor's office to articulate its definition of the problem and for the agency to explain what it has done, is doing, and is planning to do. This may be because the agency does not have adequate answers for the questions or even an adequate explanation of what it plans to do to deal with the problem. This may be because it takes time for everyone in the room to work out and agree on a new approach to the problem. Rarely does a CitiStat

session cover all of the issues raised in the analyst's previous day's memo.

Q: How can the agency influence the agenda?

A: *By coming to the meeting prepared.*

The agency directors cannot control the flow of the meeting. They can neither influence the questions raised nor the order in which they are raised. Still, if they are prepared—if they know the questions they are likely to be asked—they can have not only answers but also questions of their own. They can take advantage of the topics introduced to raise their own concerns and priorities. Some agency directors have established a reputation for entering their CitiStat sessions with their own agenda. Then, as the meeting progressed, they took advantage of the questions, problems, and issues to introduce their own ideas and specific requests.

Of course, if the agency is undergoing some dogged questioning over an obvious or repeated deficiency, its managers will need to find another, more auspicious time to introduce these ideas or requests. But given that as CitiStat evolved, and it was rarely as brutal as depicted in the popular press, most agency managers could find an opportunity—perhaps in two weeks, perhaps in four or six—to raise their concerns. And given that as CitiStat evolved, and the defiant and ineffective agency directors left the city, those who remained established enough credibility and credit with the mayor's office to get a fair hearing—if not always a yes.

Q: Who conducts the meeting?

A: *Usually the first deputy mayor.*

During the administration of Mayor O'Malley, the majority of the meetings were conducted by Michael Enright, the first deputy mayor.

Q: What should be the mayor's role at the meeting?

A: *Both a little and a lot.*

A little, in the sense that the mayor needs to neither conduct nor attend the meeting. A lot, in the sense that the mayor needs to clearly confer authority on the person who does run the meeting.

Q: What is the role of the mayor's staff and the CitiStat staff at the meeting?**A: *To ask more questions, offer suggestions, and provide support.***

Although the first deputy mayor (or the director of CitiStat) runs the meeting and controls the movement of the agenda from topic to topic, other members of the mayor's staff contribute their own questions, comments, and suggestions.

In addition, as the various participants in the meeting analyze, discuss, and debate what should be done about a problem, one or more of the central support agencies may be called upon for ideas or resources. How can the human resources department help solve an important personnel difficulty? Is there some way to resolve a ticklish legal dilemma?

Indeed, during a CitiStat meeting, it is essential to have in the room representatives from these key support agencies: budget, human resources, IT, legal, and labor. As an issue is being discussed, it may become obvious that to fix a key problem, one of these agencies may need to do something, too. And if the agency is not part of the discussion, the issue cannot be resolved until later. Consequently, CitiStat works best when each central support agency is represented by someone who is authorized and willing to make decisions and provide cooperation and assistance.

Q: What is the tone of a CitiStat meeting?**A: *Professional even personal, skeptical but friendly, interrogatory yet occasionally congratulatory, but rarely abusive.***

Some popular and academic depictions of CitiStat have described the meeting as a "star chamber" affair. The clear implication is that the mayor's staff treats agency managers and city employees with abusive contempt and imposes on them arbitrary punishment.

In fact, most of the discussion is professional, even friendly. Everyone in the room knows everyone else; they are all on a first-name basis. They know that they will see each other again in two weeks, if not before. No one has a personal incentive to be arbitrary or abusive.³⁸

This does not mean that the mayor's staff has an incentive to ignore serious problems or to fail to press agencies to resolve them. Rather, it simply means that the mayor's office has an incentive, if it wants to motivate the people in the room to do their best to resolve these problems, to treat every individual with professional respect. Only those who repeatedly demonstrate that they are unworthy of such respect—primarily because they deny that a problem exists or because they refuse to attack the problem intelligently—lose the presumption that they deserve respect.

When an agency (or a subunit within an agency) consistently fails to solve problems that have been identified and repeatedly discussed, the mayor's staff will be tough. They care about the results, and if one individual or one group repeatedly demonstrates an inability to produce them, they will not be happy—and they will show it. No one in the room will fail to get the message. Still, by the time that one individual has performed so badly as to deserve public reproach, there will be little sympathy left in the room. Indeed, most of the failing manager's colleagues will be embarrassed, because they believe that their incompetent colleague is making their agency—and themselves—look bad.

Q: What doesn't happen at a CitiStat meeting?**A: *The agency director does not deliver a formal presentation.***

In Baltimore, a CitiStat session is not show-and-tell. The meeting does not begin with the agency director delivering a PowerPoint presentation. The agency director does not control the agenda. Rather, the first deputy mayor asks the lead question for each topic and determines when it is time to move to a new one.

The Preparation for the Meetings**Q: How does the CitiStat staff prepare for the meeting?****A: *By doing a lot of analysis, summarized in a day-before memo.***

The analyst assigned to the agency begins work for the next meeting after the previous meeting; by 5:00 that day, the analyst prepares a memo outlining the decisions made and actions requested during that

meeting—a memo that might be described as a preliminary draft of the agenda for the next meeting. Then, the analyst keeps track of what progress is made on these various items, perhaps making a field visit or two to observe whether anything is really happening. Then, when the next set of two-week SR data becomes available, the analyst examines these data. Finally, the day before the next meeting, the analyst prepares a memo for the first deputy mayor and CitiStat director outlining the key issues for the next day's agenda.

Department of Recreation and Parks has created ParkStat. And Baltimore Housing (which includes the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the city's Housing Authority) even created its own room in which to conduct its HousingStat meetings.³⁹

Q: How do the first deputy mayor and CitiStat director prepare for the meeting?

A: *They read and think.*

They read the memo prepared by the CitiStat analyst, contemplating which of the many issues discussed in the memo deserve the most attention. Then, 10 minutes before the meeting, they gather in the office of the CitiStat director to decide on the issues on which they will focus.

Q: How do agency directors (and agency staff) prepare for the meeting?

A: *By conducting their own "AgencyStat" meetings.*

After the launch of CitiStat, agency directors quickly learned that it was unprofessional, unacceptable, and unpleasant to show up at their meetings unprepared. Consequently, they started holding their own meeting the day before to review the issues raised at the last meeting, to go over the latest service-request data, and to discuss the questions they might be asked. In essence, these initial meetings were like debate preparation: "What topics will be on the agenda? What problems will be raised? What questions will I be asked? How should I respond to each?"

Slowly, however, the agency directors began to figure out that just as the biweekly CitiStat meetings were the mechanism that the mayor used to run the city, so their biweekly meetings could be the mechanism that they used to run their agency. Thus, over time, these meetings morphed from debate preparation into AgencyStat. Some city agencies even have given these meetings their own "-Stat" name: The Health Department has HealthStat, plus DrugStat and LeadStat (for lead poisoning in children). The

How Does CitiStat Affect Key Relationships?

CitiStat appears to be a top-down management strategy. So what is the role of others in city government? How do the people who work in various parts of the city react to the demands and implications of CitiStat? And what about other stakeholders—how do they respond?

City Council Members

Q: What is the role of the members of the city council?

A: *Not much.*

The City of Baltimore⁴⁰ has a very “strong mayor” form of government. There are 15 members of the city council (14 elected from single-member districts, with the city council president elected at-large). The members of the council can reduce items in the mayor’s budget but not add to it. They need a two-thirds vote to override a mayoral veto. To conduct CitiStat, the mayor needs neither approval nor cooperation from the city council.

Agency Directors and Managers

Q: Do agency directors and managers buy into CitiStat?

A: *Now? Yes.*

In Baltimore, an agency director or manager who does not embrace (or, at least, accommodate himself or herself to) CitiStat will soon be a former city employee. At the beginning of CitiStat, agency directors who fought the process were the targets of harsh treatment at their biweekly meetings. Agency directors who failed to respond to CitiStat’s demands to produce results were removed. Agency directors

who could not endure this pressure to improve performance resigned. Today, no one would accept a top management position in the city if he or she could not work within the CitiStat performance-management structure.

Q: How do agency directors and managers react to getting questions from their peers?

A: *This depends upon the tone and validity of the questions.*

If the questions are asked in a civil way, and if the questions focus on crucial concerns about important results produced by the agency, agency managers will perceive them as legitimate. Conversely, if the questions are phrased in a nasty or haughty tone, or if the questions are about trivial issues, the agency managers will resent the grilling. If CitiStat becomes a gotcha game, agency directors and managers will play it as a game—seeking primarily to escape being caught rather than trying to achieve their targets.

Q: How does a mayor convince agency directors and managers to buy into CitiStat?

A: *By being persistent.*

If agency managers believe that CitiStat will disappear as soon as the next management fad materializes, they will wait it out. Indeed, agency managers automatically assume that any new initiative will soon disappear. And they have lots of experience and evidence to support this assumption. Consequently, a mayor has only one mechanism to overcome this skepticism: to be consistent and persistent.

Q: What are the consequences of CitiStat performance for agency directors and managers?

A: *Embarrassment or recognition and flexibility.*

In an organization that explicitly and publicly examines the performance of specific units—and thus the performance of the managers of those specific units—the penalty for poor performance can be quite subtle yet quite significant: embarrassment before peers. And, of course, managers who fail to perform up to expectations receive even more and more careful scrutiny.

In contrast, when performance is examined explicitly and publicly, managers who do live up to expectations get recognition that few will miss. Thus, by giving agency directors and managers the opportunity to accomplish something that is significant and recognized as such, CitiStat provides them with the opportunity to earn esteem—esteem from their peers as well as self-esteem.⁴¹

In addition, of course, managers who do produce their targeted results will benefit from less scrutiny combined with more flexibility.

Agencies

Q: What are the consequences of CitiStat performance for the agencies?

A: *The same as for their directors and managers.*

City agencies that produce results that achieve their service-request targets and perform well in other less quantifiable dimensions will earn more flexibility and less scrutiny. Agencies that consistently fail to meet their service-request targets will find themselves subjected to much more frequent and much more careful review and examination. Consistently poor performance can earn an agency pointed and penetrating interrogation.

Unions

Q: How do the unions respond?

A: *Antagonistically, yet resignedly.*

One of CitiStat's initial targets was overtime pay. This quickly generated resistance from frontline

employees and thus from their unions. Many union members had come to depend upon this extra income. Indeed, many had internalized it as part of their base pay. They implicitly conceived of overtime as part of their informal contract with the city government and thus considered themselves entitled to this income. Thus, CitiStat quickly generated union hostility.

Still, there was little the unions could do. The union contracts contained the usual provisions for overtime, but they did not *guarantee* such overtime. Consequently, the unions possessed few ways, within the context of the union contract, that they could fight the mayor's efforts to control overtime.

The unions were further opposed to the implication in CitiStat's push for better results and improved performance—the suggestion that city employees should do more work for less pay. Indeed, many city employees view the mere existence of CitiStat as maligning their work and effort.

Yet, the purpose underlying CitiStat—to produce better results for citizens—is difficult to assail frontally. And, as Baltimore has improved performance in a number of visible dimensions, union opposition to CitiStat has primarily appeared to be self-serving.

Q: Should union representatives be permitted to attend CitiStat meetings?

A: *Baltimore said: "No."*

Mayor O'Malley's position was consistent: If the union lets us attend their strategy meetings, we will invite them to CitiStat.

City Employees

Q: How do the employees respond?

A: *Warily, antagonistically, appreciatively.*

City employees are not uniform in their reaction to CitiStat. Some saw Mayor O'Malley and his CitiStat primarily as a way of denying them overtime. Others saw it as a way for City Hall to force them to do more work. Still others saw it as a way to demonstrate that they were actually doing something worthwhile.

Naturally, opinions of CitiStat vary among agencies. With some, the reaction is more positive than

others. And certainly it is fair to say that not every city employee believes that CitiStat is wonderful; nor does every city employee believe it is a disaster. As within any organization, there exists a range of views that reflects individual personalities, individual situations, and—certainly for CitiStat—individual performances.

Q: What are the consequences of CitiStat performance for frontline employees?

A: *Not as significant as those for agency directors or managers.*

Frontline employees do not attend CitiStat meetings—at least not regularly. Thus, they are subject to neither the praise nor the reproofs that the mayor's staff regularly distributes (if only in subtle and indirect ways). The performance of specific frontline units is often explicitly examined at CitiStat meetings and compared with the performance of identical or similar units, yet the frontline supervisors of these units may be blissfully unaware of much of these discussions. And yet it is through these face-to-face discussions at the regular CitiStat meetings that the mayor's leadership team motivates improved performance. Consequently, the motivational impact of CitiStat is much less direct or forceful for those who are not regular participants (or, at least, regular observers) in the CitiStat process.

Q: Do frontline employees buy into the CitiStat concept?

A: *Some do; some don't.*

Some accept it as just another reality of city employment. Some believe in it. Others hate it. Certainly many city employees accept CitiStat, but that attitude is not unanimous.

Q: How does a mayor convince frontline employees to buy into CitiStat?

A: *Again, by being persistent.*

To convince city employees of the value of CitiStat, the mayor, his leadership team, and the CitiStat staff have to take the same approach that they do with agency directors and managers: They have to be persistent.

Unfortunately, the mayor's persistence is less visible to frontline employees. After all, most of them do

not attend their agency's biweekly CitiStat meeting. So they don't see the persistent questioning about the same performance issues. They don't see the discussions of service-request data and performance against the SR targets. They don't see the body language during these discussions or hear the tone of praise or reproof.

Consequently, the mayor has to rely on agency directors and managers to convey the message. And, of course, agency directors can convey this message through their persistence at their biweekly AgencyStat sessions. Still, frontline workers can never be sure how much this persistence really comes from the mayor and how much this merely reflects their own agency director's idiosyncrasies.

The leadership of any organization always has a difficult time getting its message to frontline employees. Still, when trying to do so, persistence does count.

Citizens

Q: What do citizens think about the CitiStat strategy?

A: *Very little.*

If you walked through downtown Baltimore and asked individual citizens, "What do you think of CitiStat?" the most honest answer you would get is "Huh?" Citizens don't pay attention to government's management strategies. But they care about the results of those strategies.

Consequently, a much more relevant question would be: "How satisfied are you with the city's response to your service requests?" And, if you surveyed citizens who had called 311 with a specific service request, you might discover that (although they have never heard of CitiStat or CitiTrack) they were happy with what the city actually did.

Journalists

Q: How much attention do journalists pay to CitiStat?

A: *A little more than citizens.*

Over the years, Baltimore's CitiStat has made a good, occasional feature story for newspapers. Yet, over the past two years, even *The Baltimore Sun*

only mentioned it about once a month. Nationally, Baltimore's CitiStat gets mentioned in a newspaper article about five times a month.⁴²

Other Stakeholders

Q: Do any other stakeholders care about CitiStat?

A: *The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance cares.*

Although CitiStat is the city's internal management strategy, it has also built a reputation among those who are working to create indicators for jurisdictions and communities. For example, the mayor's office has built relationships with the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance (BNIA).⁴³ BNIA describes itself as "committed to promoting, supporting, and helping people make better decisions using accurate, reliable, and accessible data and indicators to improve the quality of life in Baltimore City neighborhoods." BNIA has created a set of 40 outcome indicators for 55 different neighborhoods in the city—it calls them "The Vital Signs"—that are designed to "take the pulse" of city "neighborhoods by measuring progress toward a shared vision and desired results for strong neighborhoods, good quality of life, and a thriving, vital city over time."⁴⁴ BNIA even makes use of some of CitiStat's data. For example, one of BNIA's indicators is for "dirty streets and alleys"; for this indicator, BNIA uses the number of "incidents of dirty streets and alleys" reported to Baltimore's 311 phone system per 1,000 people.⁴⁵

The reputation of Baltimore's CitiStat in the community indicators movement extends beyond the city limits. The Community Indicators Consortium (CIC) is a network of people and organizations (such as the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance) that focus on the use of various measures of conditions, trends, and the impact of government on communities. In 2007, CitiStat won one of the CIC's "Innovation Awards," which are sponsored by the Urban Markets Initiative at the Brookings Institution.⁴⁶

What Did Baltimore Accomplish?

Mayor O'Malley created a room, collected data, analyzed the numbers, held meetings, asked lots of questions of middle managers, and pushed agency directors for new strategies. Through all of this, the mayor sought better performance. But what, exactly, did Baltimore accomplish?

Results

Q: What results did CitiStat produce?

A: It saved Baltimore money.

In March 2007, at a conference organized by the Community Indicators Consortium, a CitiStat staff member delivered a presentation emphasizing two important impacts of CitiStat:

- "Through improved accountability on overtime spending, absenteeism, and managed contracts, the program has demonstrated cumulative positive financial impacts of over \$350 million in its seven years of existence. This does not include service improvements benefits.
- "This allowed reinvestment of \$54 million in the previous two fiscal years in children's programs, including \$25 million in school construction and renovation."⁴⁷

As a key component of the \$350 million in financial savings, Baltimore frequently features the \$30.9 million that it has accumulated through reduced overtime (see Table 1).⁴⁸

Q: What else did CitiStat produce? What were some performance improvements?

A: It filled potholes—lots of potholes, and very quickly.

Among the multiple targets that Baltimore set for completing various service requests, none was more visible than Mayor O'Malley's "48-Hour Pothole Guarantee." In fact, filling potholes was one of the most important SRs for the Department of Transportation. If a citizen called 311 to request that the city fill a pothole, the operator would take the data and declare that it would be completed within two days. Consequently, an examination of the city's data for this one priority SR reveals the kind of progress that the city made in tracking its data, in encouraging citizens to request services, and in fulfilling these requests.

In the middle of Fiscal Year 2002, Baltimore's CitiTrack system began collecting and reporting biweekly data on the Department of Transportation's

Table 1: Cost Savings from the Reduction and Control of the Use of Overtime, FY 2001–FY 2006 (in millions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	FY 2000 Baseline	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Total: FY 2001–2007
Overtime cost	24.1	18.3	15.2	20.2	20.5	20.9	19.9	22.8	137.8
Savings from baseline	n/a	5.8	8.9	3.9	3.6	3.2	4.2	1.3	30.9

performance on various SRs, including its SR for filling potholes. An examination of the 14 weeks (of 26) in FY 2002 for which CitiTrack data are available (see Table 2) reveals a number of aspects of the department's performance:

- The number of pothole SRs was relatively modest for most of the winter, not rising over 100 until late March.
- Through most of the spring, the number of pothole SRs during any two-week period remained above 100, although it never went over 200.
- The total number of pothole SRs received during the 14 (of 26) weeks for which data are available was 1,231.
- On average, the Department of Transportation achieved its two-day target for most of the period.
- In June, CitiTrack began reporting data not only on the average time to fill a pothole but also on the percentage of pothole SRs completed within the two-day target.
- Performance was particularly poor for two two-week periods. For December 22 to January 4,

the department took, on average, over seven days to fill a pothole. In mid-June (June 8–21), it filled only three potholes—none of them within the two-day target.

Contrast this with the department's performance four years later. As Table 3 on page 40 illustrates, by Fiscal Year 2006 (the last year for which complete data are available), the department's ability to fill potholes had improved significantly.

- The total number of pothole SRs received during the year was over 10,000.
- For no two-week period was the total less than 200.
- On average, for all but one of the 26 two-week periods, the department took less than a day to fulfill these SRs.
- On average, for the entire year, the department completed these SR requests in less than 0.7 days.⁴⁹
- Although the department failed to meet the two-day SR target 540 times, it did achieve this objective in 94.9 percent of these SRs.⁵⁰

Table 2: Baltimore Department of Transportation Performance in Fulfilling Pothole Service Requests, FY 2002 (November 24, 2001 to June 30, 2002)

Two Weeks Ending	Number of New Potholes	Average Days to Fill	Percent Filled in Time	Number Not Filled in Time
Dec 7	40	0.6	n/a	n/a
Dec 21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Jan 4	30	7.4	n/a	n/a
Jan 27	48	1.0	n/a	n/a
Feb 1	73	1.1	n/a	n/a
Feb 15	74	0.8	n/a	n/a
Mar 1	48	2.0	n/a	n/a
Mar 15	54	0.4	n/a	n/a
Mar 29	101	0.9	n/a	n/a
Apr 12	138	0.7	n/a	n/a
Apr 26	123	0.7	n/a	n/a
May 10	153	0.7	n/a	n/a
May 24	183	0.4	n/a	n/a
Jun 7	165	0.4	95.8	7
Jun 21	1	16.4	0	3

Note: Because CitiStat did not begin recording data until halfway through FY 2002, data is not available for July 1 through November 23.

Sources: 14 CitiTrack Statistical Reports, created for the Department of Transportation from December 12, 2001 to June 22, 2002.

Table 3: Baltimore Department of Transportation Performance in Fulfilling Pothole Service Requests, FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006)

Two Weeks Ending	Number of New Potholes	Average Days to Fill	Percent Filled in Time	Number Not Filled in Time
Jul 15	312	0.7	92.2	25
Jul 29	288	1.2	90.1	28
Aug 12	289	0.4	96.0	12
Aug 26	261	0.5	95.5	12
Sep 9	234	0.9	96.2	9
Sep 23	252	0.5	96.4	9
Oct 7	212	0.5	98.1	4
Oct 21	246	0.9	94.1	15
Nov 4	286	0.5	98.6	4
Nov 18	268	0.4	95.2	13
Dec 2	268	0.4	98.2	5
Dec 16	223	0.9	85.5	32
Dec 30	315	0.5	99.1	3
Jan 13	510	0.5	99.0	5
Jan 27	514	0.6	96.5	18
Feb 10	519	0.9	97.5	13
Feb 24	588	0.8	92.0	47
Mar 10	454	0.5	98.7	6
Mar 24	486	0.5	98.6	7
Apr 7	449	0.4	99.8	1
Apr 21	596	0.7	93.6	39
May 5	553	0.5	97.0	17
May 19	519	0.8	89.6	54
Jun 2	408	0.6	96.5	15
Jun 16	649	0.9	85.6	93
Jun 30	416	0.9	87.1	54

Sources: 26 CitiTrack Statistical Reports, created for the Department of Transportation from July 16, 2005 to July 1, 2006.

- The department met the two-day SR target less than 90 percent of the time during only four of the 26 two-week periods (one in December, one in May, and two in June).

The most interesting observation is simply that in four years the number of citizens calling 311 to request that the city fill a pothole essentially quadrupled—from perhaps 2,500 (or less) in FY 2002 to over 10,000 in FY 2006. This could be because the weather in Baltimore was considerably worse in FY 2006 than in FY 2002 or because the streets of the city had deteriorated significantly in the intervening three years. But another reasonable explanation is

that citizens had learned that calling 311 to request that the city fill a pothole actually got the pothole filled. Indeed, despite the increase in the number of pothole SRs, the city was, on average, certainly filling potholes quicker in FY 2006 than at the end of FY 2002. And, although the data required to make this calculation are not available, it would also appear that the city was also fulfilling more of these SRs (on both an absolute and percentage basis) within its two-day target.

Still, in FY 2006, the department did not live up to the mayor's 48-hour pothole "guarantee." Although it kept its average completion time under one day for all but

one of its 26 reporting periods (and that was during the summer), it nevertheless missed the 48-hour target for 540 requests, or 5.3 percent of the time.

Q: How long did it take to get real results?

A: *Too long—and yet quicker than in a lot of other cities.*

Baltimore launched CitiStat in the summer of 2000. Two years later, Baltimore's approach to producing results was only beginning to collect real data on results and only beginning to have an impact on its Department of Transportation's ability to fill potholes quickly. This, however, is not surprising. After all, changing the behavior of any large organization (public, nonprofit, or for-profit) is very difficult. Nevertheless, within two years, Baltimore's CitiStat was beginning to have the desired impact. Six years later, the impact was significantly bigger.

How many cities can accurately report today that, in the past year, it filled 9,575 potholes in less than two days? How many cities can simply report with any reasonable level of accuracy how many potholes it filled in the past year in less than two days? How many cities can simply report with any reasonable level of accuracy how many potholes it filled in the past year within any specific target period?

New York City can. It reports that, in fiscal year 2006, it received 45,228 calls to 311 about potholes, and the city's Department of Transportation repaired approximately 99 percent of them within 30 days of notification. Indeed, New York boasts that this was "the highest rate ever reported." During FY 2006, New York City reports, it repaired a total of 179,728 potholes.⁵¹

Q: Did Baltimore do anything else besides fill potholes?

A: *Yes, it improved its performance—and tightened its targets—for a number of priority service requests.*

Whenever a citizen calls 311 with a service request, the operator gives the caller both a service-request number and a target time (in days) in which the city commits to fulfilling the request. Over the years, the city has added SRs and tightened its target times for numerous SRs.

For example, in January 2002, the Bureau of Water and Wastewater had 36 SRs; by June, the number had increased by 50 percent to 55. Of these 55, the city had classified nine of them as "Priority Service Requests," often referred to as the "Magic 9" or the "Priority 9." When the Bureau of Water and Wastewater appeared for its biweekly CitiStat session, these nine SRs were often on the agenda.

Over the years, Baltimore modified these priority SRs in two significant ways. First, it tightened its time commitment for many of them. Second, it expanded the priority list. (See Table 4 on page 42.)

For example, the target time to clean up "Rip Rap" (debris left over at the end of a construction project) was cut in October 2003 from 14 days to seven days. Then, in January 2006, the target time was cut further from seven to four days.

At the same time, when the Bureau was unable to meet a target consistently, the mayor's office relaxed it, only later to tighten this target again. For example, in February 2002, when Baltimore created a target for fixing low water pressure, it began at 10 days. But a month later, with only a few such service requests, this target appeared to be too long and was reduced to two days. By April, as the number of these service requests increased significantly, the two-day target seemed too short, and it was moved up to seven days. A year later, in March 2003, it was relaxed further to 14 days. The Bureau was, however, slowly improving its performance; thus, in March 2005, Baltimore cut back this target to 10 days; and, in January 2006, it made this target even tighter: five days.

Indeed, Baltimore was constantly evaluating these targets. If an agency is consistently fulfilling an SR in less than the target time, the mayor's office will ask whether it could be lowered. Indeed, agency directors know they can get such a request. Consequently, they too are thinking about what targets they should consider reducing and to what new level. An agency director does not want to get surprised with such a request; thus, as performance improves, the agency's director and managers will discuss what is possible and what they should propose.

Table 4: Baltimore Bureau of Water and Wastewater Target Resolution Times in Days for Priority Service Requests, 2001–2006

Priority Service Requests		Target Resolution Times in Days					
		Jan 7 2002*	Jul 1 2002	Jul 1 2003	Jul 1 2004	Jul 1 2005	Jul 1 2006
The Original "Priority 9"	Sewer Overflow		1	1	1	1	1
	Sewer Water in Basement	3	1	1	1	1	1
	Rip Rap†	14	14	14	7	7	4
	Storm Inlet Choke	30	14	14	10	10	7
	Discolored Water		2	7	7	7	3
	Exterior Water Leak	15	5	7	4	4	2
	Low Water Pressure		7	14	14	10	5
	No Water		1	3	1	1	1
	Water in Basement	3	3	5	2	2	2
Three additional SRs added to the priority list to create the current "Priority 12"	Sidewalk Repairs‡		30	30	30	30	30
	Asphalt Paving Repairs‡		15	15	15	15	15
	Taste & Odor Complaints‡		10	10	10	10	10

* This is the earliest date for which a CitiTrack Statistical Report is available.

† "Rip Rap" is the debris left on the street at the end of a construction project.

‡ On September 25, 2004, the original list of nine Priority Service Requests was expanded to 12.

Source: CitiTrack Statistical Reports, Bureau of Water and Wastewater (created on: 01-07-2002, 07-06-2002, 07-05-2003, 07-17-2004, 07-16-2005, 07-15-2006) and CitiStat staff.

Q: How good is Baltimore's city government at producing results?**A: Quite good—but it would not claim to be perfect.**

Was the Baltimore Department of Transportation's pothole-filling performance inadequate, adequate, successful, or triumphant? To answer that question, one must first answer the more fundamental question: "Compared with what?" Compared with past performance, Baltimore certainly improved. Moreover, I know of no other city that is prepared to claim that it fills 95 percent of its potholes within 48 hours of receiving a request. Of course, for a city to make this claim, it must first have a mechanism (311 or something equivalent) for soliciting such service requests and collecting such data.

Still, for every 100 pothole SRs it received, Baltimore does miss its target on five of them. That is,

for every 100 citizens who want a pothole filled, five citizens are disappointed. Or are they? Do these citizens really get out their stopwatches when they call 311? Do they carefully write down the time when they call and then check it 48 hours later? Or were 95 of them pleasantly surprised when they discovered that their pothole had been filled within less than 48 hours—indeed, within less than 24?

When Federal Express delivers your package at 10:31, FedEx counts it as late. But do you really care?

Q: Is service-delivery time the best way to measure Baltimore's performance?**A: Mayor O'Malley thought so.**

What about the quality? Did the city fill a pothole only to have to refill it two months, or two weeks,

or two days later? How many of the 10,115 potholes were repeat offenders? The city is not yet keeping such recidivism data.

What about the city's transportation system? Does filling potholes really improve transportation in the city? Should the mayor attempt to develop a new kind of street surface that would eliminate potholes and thus the need for filling them? Should the mayor assign the city's smart analytical staff not to tracking potholes but to figuring out what kind of transportation system the city needs in the future?

These are, of course, questions of policy priorities. And certainly all species of elected officials—which includes all mayors—would like to be known for their sagacious, big-think ideas. Still, mayors of very populous, centuries-old, extremely dense cities have a more basic priority. They can, perhaps, get away with some big-think pretensions, but only after they have demonstrated that they can improve the delivery of basic city services.

By filling lots of potholes quickly, a mayor does not win the Nobel Prize in physics. But by fulfilling this and a variety of other service-delivery requests from citizens, a mayor can win re-election.

Cause and Effect

Q: Can Baltimore “prove” that CitiStat was the cause?

A: *Of course not.*

Any change in the results produced by a public agency has many causes. Rarely does a public agency take only one action while carefully holding the rest of its behavior faithfully constant. And even if, to examine the impact of this one action, the agency tried and was able to do so for a long enough period of time (years? decades?), there would still exist a variety of external factors that are constantly changing and which do—or, at least, might—have an impact on the results. And it is difficult to rule out any impact from many of these potential causes. After all, for any improvement in any kind of performance, one possible explanation is always regression towards the mean.⁵² And who can conclusively eliminate the possible effects of the alien spacecraft that crashed in Roswell, New Mexico, on July 4, 1947?

In reality, any change in the behavior and performance of a public agency is the result of the interactive effect of numerous causes—including both managerial initiatives and environmental factors. After all, Mayor O'Malley's decision to focus on improving the performance of city agencies as measured by the time it takes them to fulfill citizens' service requests reflects his own judgment about what Baltimoreans needed their city government to do. Other mayors at other times or in other cities, facing different environmental factors, or even another mayor of Baltimore in 2009, could easily choose other priorities.

In Baltimore, in 2000–2006, the external circumstances in which Mayor O'Malley found the city contributed not only to his decision to create CitiStat but also to how city agencies and city employees behaved (both because of CitiStat and independent of it). In fact, in 2000–2006, public managers and public employees in Baltimore might have recognized—if only implicitly—that the performance of city agencies had deteriorated significantly and that they needed to begin producing results again.

Moreover, Baltimore did not make just one simple, isolated change. Baltimore's CitiStat approach is not just one tactic but a comprehensive and complex strategy with many features and qualities. These include the data, the meetings, and the follow-up. They include analytical talent, managerial effectiveness, and mayoral leadership. Some of these features are easier to specify than others. For example, it might be possible to define how much more Baltimore used data in 2006 compared with what it used in 1996 or what St. Louis used in 2006. But what indicator could categorize the level of mayoral leadership in Baltimore in 2006 and compare it with the city's mayoral leadership in 1996 or with New Orleans' leadership in 2006? And even if all this were possible, how much of any improvement in the performance of the Department of Transportation can we attribute to the data? How much to leadership? How much to the impact of sunspots? It is impossible to say.

For public managers, it is almost impossible to prove cause and effect.⁵³

Nevertheless, Baltimore tells a very plausible story. And the story is not just about potholes. It is a story

about improvements in numerous SRs in numerous city departments. Baltimore has not morphed into nirvana, nor has its Department of Transportation transformed itself into an organization that Fred Taylor, Luther Gulick, Herb Simon, and Peter Drucker would all seek to immortalize.

Still, Baltimore has made progress—indeed, given where it started, significant progress. And it is hard to deny that its CitiStat strategy has been one consequential cause of this progress.

Q: What results can other mayors in other cities expect CitiStat to cause?

A: *A lot, or maybe a little, or maybe nothing.*

Another mayor in another city cannot simply copy Baltimore's CitiStat. Any mayor has to adapt its core concepts to his or her city's current needs. After all, during Martin O'Malley's seven years as mayor, Baltimore's CitiStat was not fixed, but frequently changing. Indeed, the same is true for Baltimore's current mayor, Sheila Dixon; she will have to do the same thing. She too must continually adapt the use of the CitiStat strategy to Baltimore's current needs and her own priorities.

A mayor can go through the CitiStat motions—creating a fancy new room, generating lots of numbers, and holding impressive meetings—and produce no real improvement in city-agency performance. Another mayor can employ this performance strategy in a way that hardly looks like Baltimore's CitiStat—and yet ratchet up performance significantly.

CitiStat guarantees nothing.

What Is the Future of CitiStat?

Is CitiStat just another fad soon to be superseded by the next big management thing imported from New York, New Zealand, or New Pig⁵⁴? Or is the CitiStat performance strategy sufficiently robust that it can be adapted by many public executives, even if they give it their own configuration and brand name?

Uniqueness

Q: Could the CitiStat performance strategy be effective in a jurisdiction that did not have a strong-mayor form of government?

A: Sure.

CitiStat requires leadership—not a particular organizational structure. No characteristic of the CitiStat approach restricts its effectiveness to a city with a strong mayor. It could easily be employed in a municipality with a council and city-manager form of government.⁵⁵

Moreover, CitiStat is not uniquely useful for a municipality. It could be employed at the state level. Indeed, in 2005, Governor Christine Gregoire of Washington created her own version, called GMAP (for Government Management, Accountability, and Performance). And in 2007, Martin O'Malley, after he was elected governor of Maryland, created StateStat.

Q: Could the CitiStat performance strategy work within an agency itself?

A: It has.

After all, the original version of this performance strategy was CompStat, developed by the New York City Police Department. CitiStat is an adaptation of CompStat.

Indeed, within New York, a number of city agencies have adapted the CompStat concept. The city's Human Resources Administration has JobStat and VendorStat. The Administration for Children's Services has ChildStat. The Department of Correction has TEAMS (which stands for Total Efficiency Accountability Management System, but which is essentially CorrectionStat). The Department of Probation has STARS (which stands for Statistical Tracking, Analysis & Reporting System, but which is essentially ProbationStat). Even the New York City Off-Track Betting Corporation has BET-STAT (which stands for "Branch Efficiency Through STATistics"⁵⁶).

Moreover, in Baltimore, almost every city agency that regularly appears at CitiStat has created its own internal "AgencyStat." These are usually scheduled a day or two before the agency's CitiStat session and were originally designed to help the agency director predict and prepare for the questions that the agency would be asked at CitiStat. Most AgencyStat sessions have, however, moved beyond merely being a kind of debate-preparation exercise. Now, in Baltimore, most agency directors use their AgencyStat internally to run their organization. Indeed, the Health Department has multiple AgencyStats; in addition to the department-wide HealthStat, it also employs LeadStat, KidStat, BabyStat, and DrugStat.

Evolution

Q: Did Baltimore's CitiStat change over time?

A: Certainly.

CitiStat began using the available data—primarily financial and personnel data. And, as a result, much of the initial focus was on such administrative issues as controlling the use of overtime and unscheduled

leave. Then, as Baltimore created its CitiTrack database and linked it to its 311 phone system, it began to shift its focus to the delivery of specific service requests and the achievement of specific targets for them. Finally, as performance against these targets improved, the city shortened the time.

Q: How should a CitiStat performance strategy evolve over time?

A: *By responding to new performance deficits and mayoral priorities.*

CitiStat should not be a rigid process. Yet, after a few years, everyone may have settled into a routine. Every two weeks, the data are analyzed and problems identified. Every two weeks, the meetings are held, progress reported, problems debated, solutions suggested, decisions made, and follow-up sent. Every two weeks, the routine starts all over again.

This routinization is very predictable and very reasonable. A city is a very operational unit of government. It never solves the pothole problem or the crime problem or the restaurant-health problem. It cannot forget about these recurring problems. After a successful year, it cannot take the next one off. It cannot relax. Neither the mayor, the CitiStat staff, nor the agencies can assume that they have fixed any of these problems. Even if a particular measure has revealed some significant improvements, and even if the actions of the relevant agencies have contributed directly and unquestionably to this improvement, neither the mayor nor the agency can slow down. If the agency, the mayor, and the CitiStat staff fail to be vigilant, the successes can quickly disappear.

Sustainability

Q: Is it possible to ensure the continuity of a CitiStat strategy over a change in chief executives?

A: *Sure. It already has.*

On November 2006, Martin O'Malley was elected governor of Maryland. On January 17, 2007, O'Malley was inaugurated as governor, and Sheila Dixon, president of the Baltimore City Council, took the oath of office as Baltimore's mayor. She has enthusiastically continued O'Malley's CitiStat strategy. And although O'Malley took several of his staff that were central to the operation of CitiStat

(specifically Michael Enright, his first deputy mayor, and Matthew Gallagher, the director of CitiStat⁵⁷), Dixon promoted Christopher Thomaskutty (a deputy director of CitiStat under O'Malley) to head her CitiStat operation.

Q: What kind of approach will increase the probability that the next mayor will continue using CitiStat to manage a city?

A: *Produce real, visible results!*

A CitiStat-style performance strategy is of no value unless it helps government produce better results. If a mayor effectively employs CitiStat to ratchet up the performance of city agencies, the succeeding mayor is likely to conclude that it is useful. If a mayor creates a CitiStat but is unable to show that it can indeed have an impact on agency performance, the successor will quickly discard it.

Thus, sustainability depends on two factors:

- Real, better, visible results
- A credible explanation of why and how the strategy worked

Certainly, the new chief executive will need to assert that he or she has made "significant"—even "essential"—upgrades to the strategy. The new executive will want to claim that some critical deficiencies have been fixed. The new chief executive may give the strategy a new and flashier name. Still, any chief executive who inherits a performance strategy that is working—and is widely believed to be working—will want to continue (but, of course, improve) the use of that strategy.

The new chief executive could try to create his or her own performance strategy. But this is costly—costly in dollars, costly in personal time, costly in staff time, and costly in the inevitable setbacks and mistakes. Only if the new chief executive believes that there exists something that is obviously and significantly superior—whether it comes from New York or New Zealand or New Pig—will the old performance strategy be replaced.

In Baltimore, Mayor O'Malley created the 48-hour pothole guarantee. If a citizen calls 311 with a service request for filling a pothole at a specific

location, O'Malley guaranteed that it would be filled within 48 hours. What are subsequent mayors going to do? Create the 72-hour pothole guarantee? And if future mayors conclude that CitiStat helps to achieve the 48-hour pothole target, they are unlikely to cavalierly discard CitiStat.

To predict whether a CitiStat will be sustained, simply check to see if it is clearly producing visible results that are important to citizens.

Endnotes

1. In November 2006, Martin O'Malley was elected governor of Maryland.

2. Christopher Swope, "Restless for Results: Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley is tracking performance on a scale never seen before in local government. He wants change, in a hurry," *Governing*, April 2001, pp. 20–23. Ellen Perlman, "'Stat' Fever: The practice of collecting data to monitor and improve government performance continues to gain momentum and evolve," *Governing*, January 2007, pp. 48–50.

3. Lenneal J. Henderson, *The Baltimore CitiStat Program: Performance and Accountability* (Washington, D.C.: IBM Center for The Business of Government, 2003). Worcester Regional Research Bureau, *CompStat and CitiStat: Should Worcester Adopt These Management Techniques*, Report No. 03-01, Worcester, Mass.: February 18, 2003. Cathy Sharp, Jocelyn Jones, and Alison M. Smith, *What Do We Measure and Why?: An Evaluation of the CitiStat Model of Performance Management and its Applicability to the Scottish Public Sector* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Scottish Executive Social Research, 2006).

4. See the Government Innovators Network, The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University: <http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/awards.html?id=3638>.

5. Although this report focuses on CitiStat as a leadership strategy that mayors can use to improve the performance of city agencies, the key components of the strategy can be employed by elected chief executives at any level of government—and, indeed, by the heads of public agencies (whether they are political appointees or civil servants). After all, CitiStat is an adaptation of CompStat, which was created by the New York City Police Department (and which has also been adapted by a variety of public agencies in New York City). Moreover, the CitiStat-CompStat approach has also been adapted by state governments—by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (which calls its approach the Performance

Center) and by the State of Washington (which calls its adaptation GMAP, for Government Management, Accountability, and Performance).

6. In this report, I use the word *agency* to refer to any unit within city government that reports at a CitiStat meeting (regardless of whether its official name is department, division, bureau, section, office, or agency). I use the phrase *agency director* to refer to the top executive official of this agency. And I use the phrase *agency managers* to refer to those executive officials who manage a subunit within that agency, a subunit that is big enough or important enough so that its manager consistently attends CitiStat meetings.

7. Fortunately, there exists no International Organization for Standardization (ISO) that certifies whether a city has implemented an acceptable, accredited version of CitiStat. Still, you better hurry up and get your city's CitiStat up and running, and recognized as effective, before some guardian of a new ISO standard of which you have never heard knocks on your door and asserts that you can't claim to be a recognized CitiStat unless you comply with their regulations, answer their questions, jump through their hoops, and qualify to hang their certificate on your wall.

8. CitiStat could also be employed in a city-manager form of government. In such a city, the strategy would be implemented by the city manager, but the specific results to be achieved would need to be worked out and agreed to by the city manager and the city council.

9. Time is an even scarcer resource than money. Indeed, when it comes to time, no human is richer than any other. Every one of us has exactly 168 hours in a week. Some may need to sleep less than others. Nevertheless, every individual has only 168 hours to allocate among sleeping, eating, working, and playing. Moreover, you cannot save any time in a "clock bank" for next week. You cannot borrow any time from someone else. Once the week is over, you have spent every one of your 168 hours, and you can't get any of them back.

10. Overtime is a serious problem in lots of government jurisdictions. This is because each decision to pay overtime is made by a middle manager or frontline supervisor who has an immediate problem: Something—a job, responsibility, duty, or task—needs to be covered, and none of those on regular duty are available to cover it. But a member of the existing staff—someone already on the payroll—can (and will) cover it—but only if he or she is paid overtime. In the immediate short run, this is (for the middle manager or frontline supervisor) a very logical decision. (This is particularly true if the organization's personnel budget contains no slack—if, that is, the organization staffing levels are based on the assumptions that no one is ever sick and that no emergencies ever arise.) Indeed, only if the organization undertakes the necessary planning and scheduling to ensure that all but the rarest of jobs, responsibilities, duties, and tasks can be covered by the regular staff will the pressure to employ overtime to fix immediate short-term problems disappear.

Of course, many employees prize overtime opportunities. Indeed, many employees view their overtime pay as an entitlement—no different from their regular salary. In addition, middle managers and frontline supervisors may view it as a form of patronage. They can offer overtime to individuals on their staff as a reward for good work or as a quid pro quo for something else.

Consequently, controlling overtime is not only an administrative task; it is also a personnel challenge. In many government jurisdictions, management's efforts to change overtime practices have created bitter fights in both the legislature and the courts.

11. Robert D. Behn, "Management by Groping Along," *The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Fall 1988), pp. 643–663. Also, Robert D. Behn, *Leadership Counts: Lessons for Public Managers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), Chapter 7, "Management by Groping Along," pp. 127–150.

12. Karl E. Weick, "Small Wins: Redefining the Scale of Social Problems," *American Psychologist*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 1984), pp. 40–49.

13. Louis Henri Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," *Lippincott's Magazine*, March 1896.

14. For an examination of why even a mayor will benefit significantly by consulting a variety of other individuals—even individuals who are obviously not nearly as clever or discerning as the mayor—see: James Surowiecki, *The Wisdom of Crowds* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004).

15. Robert D. Behn, *Performance Leadership: 11 Better Practices That Can Ratchet Up Performance*

(Washington, D.C.: IBM Center for The Business of Government, 2004), p. 23.

16. <http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/news/citistat/index.html>.

17. For additional information on Baltimore's 311 system, see: <http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/news/311.html> and <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/news//press/020328.html>.

18. Weick, "Small Wins."

19. For a discussion of this concept, see: Mark H. Moore, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

20. In the public sector, the best direct connection with which I am familiar between an agency output and the desired outcomes is the immunization of children against measles. As one study reveals, the production of the output has a greater than 99 percent chance of producing the desired outcome. "Studies indicate that more than 99% of persons who receive two doses of measles vaccine (with the first dose administered no earlier than the first birthday) develop serologic evidence of measles immunity." William L. Atkinson, Charles Wolfe, Sharon G. Humiston, Rick Nelson (eds.), *Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases*, 10th edition (Atlanta, Ga: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007), p. 139.

21. In New York City, the Fund for the City of New York working with the Mayor's Office of Operation created the Street Cleanliness Scorecard. The purpose was to shift the evaluation of the Sanitation Department—and thus its efforts—from merely focusing on the output of its work (the trash collected) to the outcomes (how clean the street actually is). For an explanation of these scorecards (including examples of the various scores and citywide scores from FY 1975 through FY 2006), go to: http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/downloads/pdf/scorecard/about_scorecard.pdf.

For scorecards for recent years (by borough and by community board), go to: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/html/scorecard/scorecard.shtml>.

22. BOMFOG was the acronym that journalists gave to a phrase that Governor Nelson Rockefeller repeatedly used in his political speeches: "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God." When Rockefeller got to this phrase, journalists knew he was into his concluding oratorical flourish and they could safely leave to start writing their story. Today, of course, no politician uses the BOMFOG phrase. It is hardly politically correct. Still, they each have their own boilerplate rhetoric.

23. Why? Because the outgoing mayor—even an outgoing mayor from the same political party—wants to leave

office with as many friends as possible. And one way to make friends is to shower money upon them.

24. This is not a hypothetical example. I know of at least one mayor who did this. Hiding the CitiStat meetings lowered the cost of failure, but it also increased the probability of failure. Indeed, this CitiStat disappeared (though it is actually hard to say that it disappeared since it never really "appeared").

25. This too is not a hypothetical example. I know of at least one mayor who did this, while also asserting that this CitiStat was indeed a high priority.

26. I did not understand this until I visited Baltimore for the second time (January 2004). Fortunately, the second set of CitiStat sessions that I observed were for the same agencies that I had watched three months earlier (October 2003). Thus, I could quickly see the clear continuity of the performance issues being examined. Yet most public officials who seek to understand how CitiStat works visit Baltimore for only one day.

27. For a discussion of the concept of a government agency's "performance deficit," see: Robert D. Behn, "On why public managers need to focus on their: Performance Deficit," *Bob Behn's Public Management Report*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (September 2006); Robert D. Behn, *Performance Leadership: 11 Better Practices That Can Ratchet Up Performance* (Washington, D.C.: IBM Center for The Business of Government, 2004), pp. 10–11.

28. In terms of Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, the CitiStat staffer needs both "logical-mathematical intelligence" and "the personal intelligences." Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), particularly chapters 7 and 10.

29. Whenever current data have varied far from the norm, regression towards the mean (a reversion to traditional behavior) is always a legitimate prediction. See Francis Galton, "Regression Towards Mediocrity in Hereditary Stature," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 15 (1886), pp. 246–263.

30. This is only roughly true. CitiStat staffers often move on to other jobs (or other lives), which occasionally leaves some vacancies. And qualified analysts are not instantaneously available, leaving some holes that the remaining staff must cover.

31. Jack Maple, *The Crime Fighter* (New York: Random House 1999), p. 33.

32. Baltimore borrowed the general framework of the room from the New York City Police Department, modifying the arrangement of the furniture and technology to fit within the one room that was available in City

Hall. In particular, Baltimore adopted the idea that there should be a podium behind which stands the commander of the precinct being examined. Baltimore also adopted the concept that everyone else in the room should be sitting. And it adopted the idea that the overall leaders of the organization (for example, the chief of department and the chief of patrol, or the first deputy mayor and the director of CitiStat) sit at a table facing the podium.

33. The web address for 311 City Call is: <https://baltimore.CustomerServiceRequest.org>. Here, from a drop-down menu, a citizen can select from 70 different types of service requests or enter a keyword.

34. More information about Motorola's 311 and CRM technology can be obtained from: Motorola, Inc., 1301 East Algonquin Road, Schaumburg, IL 60196; 1-888-567-7347, <http://www.motorola.com/publicservice>.

35. <http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/news/citistat/index.html>.

36. Okay. I accept that this is an exaggeration. Staffers in any budget office—or, I hope, at least some staffers—also want to ensure that the money is spent not just according to the rules but also productively, and, if the money is not being spent productively, to modify how the money is spent to improve how productively it is spent. Nevertheless, such purposes are usually subservient to saving money.

37. Actually, because CitiStat quickly developed an international reputation, almost every CitiStat session includes a visitor from some city, other jurisdiction, or public agency.

38. As Robert Axelrod explains in *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), people who know that they will work with each other in the future have an incentive to maintain good, professional relations.

39. For information on HousingStat, see: http://www.baltimorehousing.org/index/ps_housingstat.asp.

40. In Maryland, the City of Baltimore provides not only traditional city services but also the services that would otherwise be provided by a county. The City of Baltimore is almost entirely surrounded by Baltimore County, a separate jurisdiction with no responsibilities inside the city limits.

41. Robert D. Behn, "On the value of creating: Esteem Opportunities," *Bob Behn's Public Management Report*, Vol. 1, No. 9 (May 2004).

42. On June 1, 2007, I did a LexisNexis search for "CitiStat" and "Baltimore." Here are the number of articles that I found over the past two years with these two words somewhere in the full text.

Type of Publication	Number of Articles
<i>The Baltimore Sun</i>	24
Maryland newspapers	53
Southeast newspapers	84
Northeast newspapers	34
Midwest newspapers	2
Western newspapers	1
Major (national) newspapers	81
Magazines and journals	6

Google Scholar found 108 different publications containing the word "CitiStat."

43. For a discussion of the relationship between CitiStat and BNIA, see: Marsha R. B. Schachtel, "CitiStat and the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance: Using Information to Improve Communication and Community," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 253–265.

44. <http://www.ubalt.edu/bnia/about/index.html>.

45. http://www.ubalt.edu/bnia/indicators/Expl_Sanitation_DirtyStreets_VS3.html.

46. <http://www.communityindicators.net/>.

47. <http://www.communityindicators.net/documents/CICCitiStatPresentation.pdf>.

48. These are the savings from eight departments: Fire, General Services, Health, Housing and Community Development, Recreation and Parks, Solid Waste, Transportation, and Water and Wastewater.

49. Eyeballing the Average-days-to-fill row suggests that this number is indeed about 0.7. A calculation from the underlying data reveals that the average for the entire year is 0.66 days.

50. Again, this number is not in the table. It can, however, be easily calculated from the Number-not-filled-in-time row.

51. *The Mayor's Management Report, Fiscal 2006* (New York: City of New York, Mayor's Office of Operations, September 2006), pp. 60–61.

52. There are two classic references for this phenomenon: Galton's original 1886 article describing it, and Campbell and Ross's investigation of how it explained the results of one public-policy initiative.

Francis Galton, "Regression towards Mediocrity in Hereditary Stature," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 15 (1886), pp. 246–63.

Donald T. Campbell and H. Laurence Ross, "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis," *Law & Society Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (August 1968), pp. 33–54.

Note that regression towards the mean can explain an improvement in performance from an unusual low or a deterioration in performance from an unusual high.

53. For a discussion of the difficulty of employing the program-evaluators "gold standard"—the double-blind, controlled experiment—to determine what impact any management initiative has had, see Robert D. Behn, *Leadership Counts: Lessons for Public Managers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), chapters 8 and 9.

54. "New Pig Corporation manufactures the world's largest selection of industrial absorbents for oil spill cleanup." See <http://www.newpig.com>.

55. In fact, the city of Palm Bay, Florida, which has a city-manager form of government, has created PalmStat.

56. Honest. Check out: <http://www.nycotb.com/viewPage.cfm?pageId=25>.

57. Governor O'Malley chose Enright to be his chief of staff, and Gallagher to be a deputy chief of staff and director of his StateStat initiative.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert D. Behn is a lecturer at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the faculty chair of the School's executive-education program on "Driving Government Performance: Leadership Strategies that Produce Results." He specializes in governance, leadership, and the management of large public agencies, and is working on a book on "PerformanceStat."

Dr. Behn served on the staff of Governor Francis W. Sargent of Massachusetts, as a scholar in residence with the Council for Excellence in Government, and on the faculty of the Harvard Business School and of Duke University's Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, where he was director of its Governors Center.

He has led retreats for gubernatorial offices and cabinets in several states.

He has conducted executive-education seminars in Bangkok, Berlin, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Monterrey, Oslo, Reykjavik, and Sydney, as well as for the United Nations, governmental associations, and federal and state agencies.

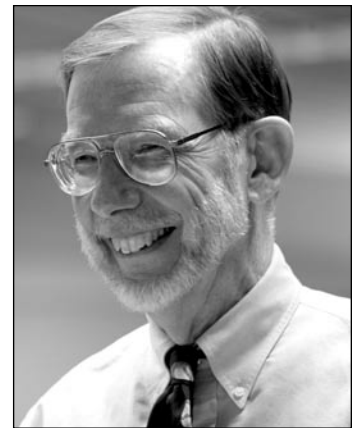
Dr. Behn publishes the monthly *Bob Behn's Public Management Report*. He is the author of *Rethinking Democratic Accountability* (Brookings, 2001), and he is also the author of *Leadership Counts: Lessons for Public Managers* (Harvard University Press, 1991).

His articles include "Why Measure Performance? Different Purposes Require Different Measures," *Public Administration Review* (2003); "Rethinking Accountability in Education," *International Public Management Journal*, (2003); "The Psychological Barriers to Performance Management: Or Why Isn't Everyone Jumping on the Performance-Management Bandwagon?" *Public Performance & Management Review* (2002); "Strategies for Avoiding the Pitfalls of Performance Contracting," *Public Productivity and Management Review* (1999, with Peter A. Kant); "Branch Rickey as a Public Manager," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* (1997); and "Management By Groping Along," *The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (1988).

Dr. Behn's "Cutback Budgeting" won the Raymond Vernon Prize for the article in Volume 4 (1985) of *The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* that "makes the greatest contribution to intellectual discourse on public policy and management." His "Management and the Neutrino: The Search for Meaningful Metaphors" won the Marshall E. Dimock Award for the best lead article in *Public Administration Review* in 1992.

Dr. Behn earned a B.S. in physics from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and a Ph.D. in decision and control from Harvard University.

He grew up a fan of the Brooklyn Dodgers. At the end of the 1967 season, however, he went to Fenway Park for the Boston Red Sox' last game. (If you don't understand the significance of this, he will explain it to you in more detail than you want to know.)



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