

ROLE 5: ASSIST ELECTED OFFICIALS OR CITIZENS

Practice 5d. Engage citizens: Engage citizens in determining performance goals, objectives, or measures.

City of Phoenix, Arizona, City Auditor Department (phoenix.gov/AUDITOR): In 1991 the City Auditor Department began leading focus groups that helped identify performance indicators eventually selected by City departments (see 3a). Audit staff talked with customers of departments and front line staff to find out what was important about the services being delivered. From that they worked with departments to develop performance measures. The focus groups helped clarify discrepancies between what service managers thought citizens wanted, and citizens' actual service expectations. One focus group lesson that cut across departments was the need for simpler, less abstract performance terminology for citizens to relate to. Phoenix changed its terminology from the typical input-output-efficiency-outcome labels. The City found that from Phoenix citizens' perspectives, "results" usually fell into one of four categories: satisfaction, cost, cycle time, or mission. Over a five year period, the City Auditor Department conducted customer and employee focus groups to help all City departments develop performance measures intended to be more results-oriented than their existing measures. Now the City Auditor Department conducts focus groups by request for departments that wish to update their performance measures. In 2003-04, the Auditor Department will assist the Public Transit Department in reviewing and updating its performance indicators.

In 1999 the City Auditor Department again led a series of citizen meetings. These meetings were used to help develop the "Organizational Indicators" found at the beginning of the City Manager Executive Reports, and that form a "report card" for city services. Auditor Department staff asked citizen participants what was important to them about the services that the City provided. The Auditor Department first worked with the National Civic League and the Urban Institute to conduct two pilot workshops with citizens to discuss the concept of performance measurement and explore possible areas for measurement. Then, ten community forums were held throughout Phoenix in convenient locations (e.g., libraries, community centers, senior centers) to find out what was important to citizens about the services provided by the City. During these meetings, citizens indicated they were most interested in 12 types of services or issues. Staff then generated hundreds of possible outcome indicators for these citizen priorities. A second set of meetings was held where citizens used computer-voting technology to select specific outcome indicators they considered of highest priority. They voted using a handheld device similar to those used by TV game show audiences. The system quickly tabulates votes and allows participants to immediately see a graph of the voting results. This process produced "Organizational Indicators" of broad public interest, including indicators not likely to be reported in reports only organized by department. While some of the Organizational Indicators are traditionally associated with specific departments (e.g., police and fire response times), some are the results of efforts of multiple departments (e.g., citywide energy expenditures). Also, others Organizational Indicators are, at most, only partly influenced by city government (e.g., average commuting time, unemployment rate) but are community outcomes of great concern to citizens.

The *City Manager Executive Report* is available from the web pages of the City Manager (<http://phoenix.gov/CITYGOV/citymgr.html>) and City Auditor (<http://phoenix.gov/AUDITOR>).