

CASE HISTORY

City of Phoenix, Arizona: In Phoenix, by 1990, there was no need for auditors to focus on a lack of use of performance measurement. By then, the use of measurement by City departments to manage and improve services was a well-established norm. Instead, considerable City Auditor Department effort in the 1990s focused on making performance measures more results-oriented as perceived by citizens and service customers, based on the interest of the City Manager, to whom the City Auditor reports. From 1990-95, the City Auditor Department worked with several departments a year to help managers (practice 4b) develop more results-oriented measures. Part of that effort involved audit staff conducting citizen focus groups (practice 5d) to learn what “results” meant to service customers. Based on the focus groups and other research, auditors advised departments on possible new performance measures (practice 3a), and department managers selected the specific measures they would use. By 1995, performance measures reported by all departments to the City Manager, and then to the City Council in the monthly City Manager Executive Report, had been revised.

In 1999, the City of Phoenix took advantage of grant-funded assistance available from the National Civic League and Urban Institute to more broadly explore public performance issues with citizens. Through a series of citizen forums (practice 5d) run by the Auditor Department that year, the City identified outcome measures considered of highest priority to citizens that cut across a broad range of services and issues. These became “Organizational Indicators” reported in the beginning of the City Manager Executive Report. Between 1995 and 1999, and since then, the City Auditor Department has helped departments, *on request*, further improve performance measures (3a), conduct customer focus groups (5d), or evaluate performance (practice 1a). Since 1998, the Auditor Department has also coordinated data collection (practice 3b) by a contractor in conducting an entity-wide customer survey of *internal* services.

In 2001, the City Auditor Department stepped up its efforts to validate the reliability of department performance graphs (practice 2a) reported in the City Manager Executive Report, in preparation for making the report more widely available to the public by posting it on the Internet. Over two years, audit staff validated all department graphs, where previously they had primarily validated graphs of new measures for the report. Since then, validation of about 25 percent of Executive Report indicators per year has become part of the Audit Department’s regular work plan. Also, the Auditor Department has since worked with the City Manager (practice 4b) to find and implement new ways to inform more citizens about City performance, including development and distribution, in English and Spanish, of printed summary booklets of the Organizational Indicators from the annual version of the Executive Report.