

# Swimming in a Fishbowl: Holding your agency accountable for its work

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## Use your imagination for a minute:

It is the year 2015 and your organization has just been awarded the "Community Program of the Year Award" by the National Human Services Assembly because of the significant impact your organization has made on the lives of the people and community that you serve. Your organization is featured on the front page of Time Magazine because of this award. What would your headline say?

# Invest in the Youth of Today

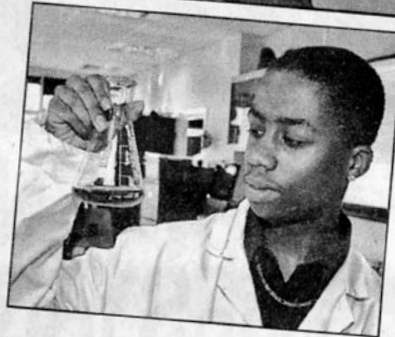
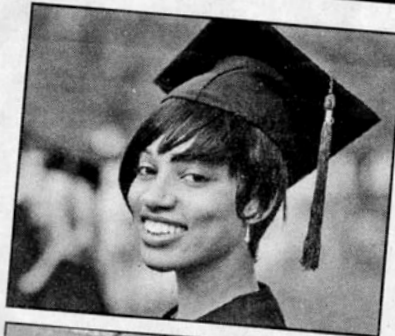
## Create the Workforce of Tomorrow

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# URBAN ALLIANCE

Employing Youth.  
Inspiring Excellence.



- 100% of Urban Alliance Interns Graduate from High School.
  - Over 85% of Urban Alliance Interns Attend College.
-

# What problems have you encountered with accountability?

- \* Not having data to show how well my program is working
- \* Being overwhelmed by too much data
- \* My program being held accountable for improvement on a community level
- \* Using a complicated system that I don't understand

**USEFUL TO  
MANAGERS**

**SIMPLE**

**COMMON SENSE**

**PLAIN LANGUAGE**

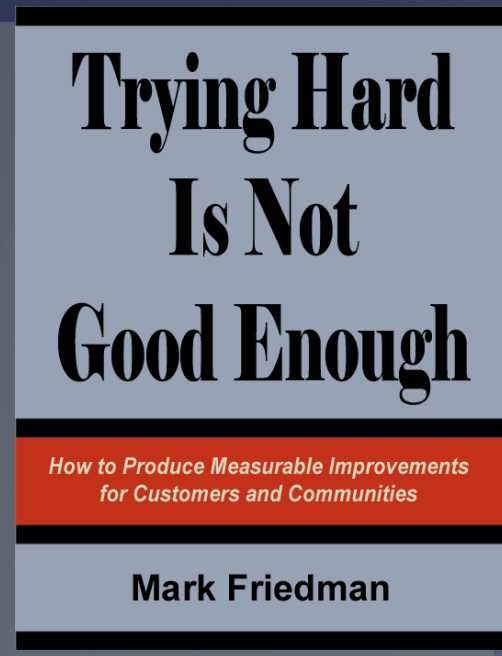
# What is Results-Based Accountability (RBA)?

A disciplined way of thinking and taking action that:

- Communities can use to improve the lives of children, youth, adults, families and the community as a whole.
- Agencies can use to improve the performance of programs and the agency as a whole.



# Based on the work of Mark Friedman:



## WEBSITES:

[www.raguide.org](http://www.raguide.org)

[www.resultsaccountability.com](http://www.resultsaccountability.com)

## BOOK and DVD ORDERS:

[www.trafford.com](http://www.trafford.com)

[www.resultsleadership.org](http://www.resultsleadership.org)

# RBA in a Nutshell

## 2 – 3 – 7

### \* 2 Kinds of Accountability plus Language Discipline

- Population- or Community-Level Quality of Life
  - (Results & Indicators)
- Performance- or Program-Level
  - (Performance Measures)

### 3 Kinds of Performance Measures

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

### 7 Questions From Ends to Means (In less than an hour)

# The 7 Questions of Population Level Accountability

- 1 What are the quality of life conditions of well-being (Results) that you want?
- 2 How will you measure them? (Indicators)
- 3 How are you doing on the measures?
- 4 What is the story behind the data?
- 5 Who are the partners with a role to play?
- 6 What works to improve the measures?
- 7 What do you propose to do?

# The 7 Questions of Performance Accountability:

- 1 Who are your customers?
- 2 How can you measure if your customers are better off?
- 3 How can you measure if you are delivering service well?
- 4 How are you doing on these measures? What is the story behind the data?
- 5 Who are the partners with a role to play to help you do better?
- 6 What works?
- 7 What do you propose to do?

# Results Accountability

is made up of two parts:

Population Accountability

about the well-being of

**WHOLE POPULATIONS**

For Communities – Cities – Counties – States - Nations

Performance Accountability

about the well-being of

**CLIENT POPULATIONS**

For Programs – Agencies – and Service Systems

# DEFINITIONS

## RESULT

A condition of well-being for children, adults, families or communities.

Babies born healthy, Children succeeding in school, Safe communities, Clean Environment, Prosperous Economy

## INDICATOR

A measure which helps quantify the achievement of a result.

Rate of low-birthweight babies, Rate of high school graduation, crime rate, air quality index, unemployment rate

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE

A measure of how well a program, agency or service system is working.

- Three types:
1. How much did we do?
  2. How well did we do it?
  3. Is anyone better off? = Customer Results or Outcomes

However beautiful  
the strategy,  
you should occasionally  
look at the **results**.



Winston Churchill

# From Ends to Means

## From Talk to Action

RESULT

INDICATOR

PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Customer result = Ends

Service delivery = Means



ENDS



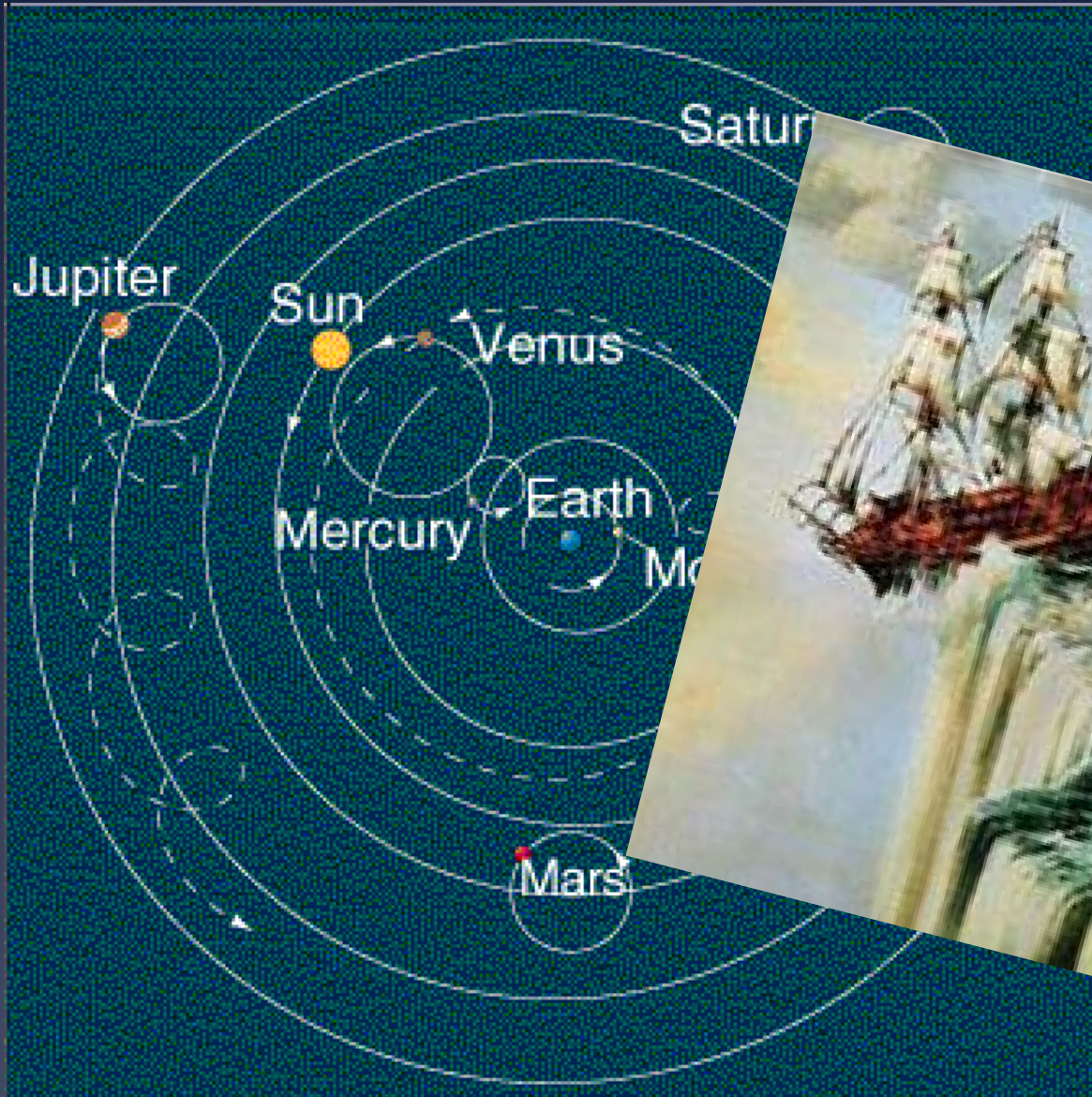
MEANS

# Mental Models:

Deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action.

Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*

# Noteworthy Mental Models



# Other Noteworthy Mental Models

\* "Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"

*H.M. Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927.*

\* "This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."

*Western Union internal memo, 1876.*

\* "We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out."

*Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962.*

\* "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

*Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977*

# Select the Right Strategy: Automotive Crossing of Water



# Right Implementation?



# Performance Accountability

For Programs, Agencies and  
Service Systems

As a manager, if you wanted to make the headline a reality in 2015:

1. What information would you want to have?
2. How would you use this information?

# Performance Measures

## 1. How much do you do?

*Who are our customers (the people receiving our services) and what services do we provide to them?*

## 2. How well did you do it?

*What is the quality of the services we provide?*

## 3. Is anyone better off?

*What is the desired impact of those services for/on the people using our services?*

# Program Performance Measures

	Quantity	Quality
Effort	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
Effect	Is anyone better off?	
	#	%

# Selecting Headline Performance Measures

## How much did we do?

# Clients/customers served

# Activities (by type of activity)

# Education

Quantity

Quality

How much did we do?

How well did we do it?

Effort

**Number of  
students**

**Student-teacher  
ratio**

**Number of  
classes provided**

Effect

Is anyone better off?

**Number of  
9<sup>th</sup> graders who  
enter college or  
employment after  
graduation**

**Percent of  
9<sup>th</sup> graders who  
enter college or  
employment after  
graduation**

# Selecting Headline Performance Measures

How much

## How well did we do it?

% Common measures

e.g. workload ratio, staff turnover rate,  
% staff fully trained, unit cost, worker  
safety

% Activity-specific measures

e.g. % timely, % standards met

# Senior Tenant Services

	Quantity	Quality
Effort	<p>How much did we do?</p> <p><b>Number of tenants served</b></p>	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <p><b>Percent of tenants reporting satisfaction with case manager</b></p>
Effect	<p>Is anyone better off?</p> <p><u>Number of tenants who report feeling safe</u></p> <p><u>Number</u> of tenants with depression</p>	<p><u>Percent of tenants reporting feeling safe.</u></p> <p><u>Percent</u> of tenants with depression</p>

# Selecting Headline Performance Measures

How much did we do?

How well did we do it?

**Is anyone better off?**

#/% Skills / Knowledge

#/% Attitude

#/% Behavior

#/% Circumstance

# Drug/Alcohol Treatment Program

	Quantity	Quality
Effort	<p>How much did we do?</p> <p><b>Number of persons treated</b></p>	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <p><b>Percent of staff with training/certification</b></p>
Effect	<p>Is anyone better off?</p> <p><b><u>Number</u> of clients off of alcohol &amp; drugs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- at exit</li><li>- 12 months after exit</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Percent</u> of clients off of alcohol &amp; drugs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- at exit</li><li>- 12 months after exit</li></ul>

# After School Program for Middle School

## Boys

Quantity

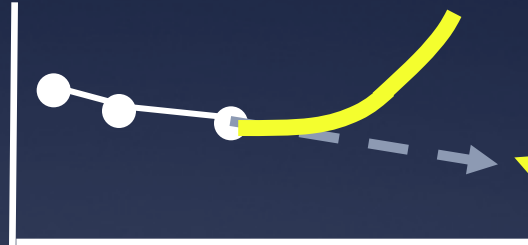
Quality

Effort	<p>How much did we do?</p> <p><b>Number of boys attending per week</b></p>	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <p><b>% of staff certified in Youth Worker Methods</b></p>
	<p>Is anyone better off?</p> <p><b>Number of boys with improved decision-making skills</b></p> <p><b>Number of boys maintaining a healthy weight</b></p>	<p><b>% of boys with improved decision-making skills</b></p> <p><b>% of boys maintaining a healthy weight</b></p>
Effect		

# Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

Agency/Division/Branch/Program

Performance  
Measure  
Baseline



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

How are we doing?

Why?

Help?

Options?

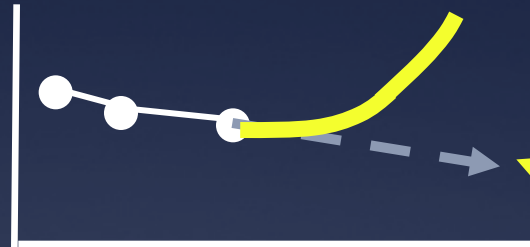
Propose to do?

Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

Middle School After School Nutrition Program

How are we doing?

% of boys maintaining a healthy weight



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

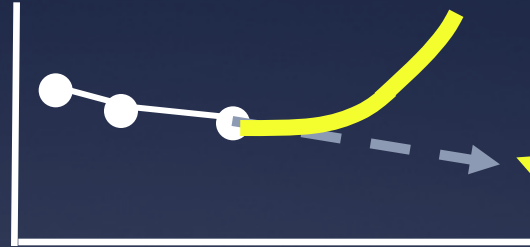
What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

# Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

## Middle School After School Nutrition Program

% of boys  
maintaining a  
healthy weight



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

How are we doing?

Why?

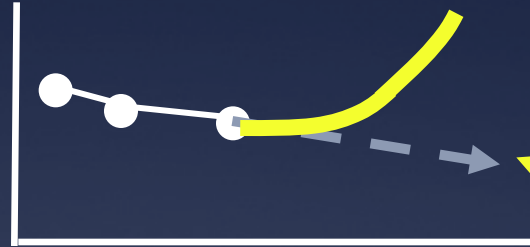
# The Story Behind the Baseline

- *Key Factors/Causes?*
- *Root Causes (Ask “Why?”  
3 times)*
- *Prioritize – which are the  
most important to address  
to “turn the curve” of the  
trend line?*
- *Research Agenda?*

Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

Middle School After School Nutrition Program

% of boys  
maintaining a  
healthy weight



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

How are we doing?

Why?

Help?

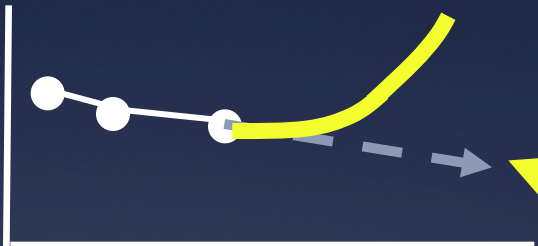
# Partners

- *Who are partners who may have a role to play in turning the curve?*
- *Does the story behind the curve suggest any new partners?*

Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

Middle School After School Nutrition Program

% of boys  
maintaining a  
healthy weight



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

How are we doing?

Why?

Help?

Options?

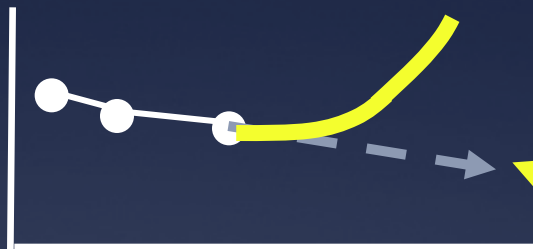
# What Works

- *Brainstorm options for actions to “turn the curve”?*
- *Low-cost/no-cost?*
- *Off-the-wall ideas?*
- *Passionately sell your idea*

Results-Based Decision Making: Talk to Action

Middle School After School Nutrition Program

% of boys  
maintaining a  
healthy weight



Story behind the baseline

Partners *(with a role to play in turning the curve)*

What Works

Action Plan (w/ Budget)

How are we doing?

Why?

Help?

Options?

Propose to do?

# Action Plan

- *Leverage: will turn the curve of the baseline?*
- *Feasible and Affordable?*
- *Specific: who, what, when, where, how?*
- *Consistent with values?*

# POPULATION ACCOUNTABILITY

For Whole Populations  
in a Geographic Area

# Start With Ends

**WORK BACKWARDS**

**TO MEANS**

*(Data-driven and transparent  
decision making)*

# The 7 Questions of Population Level Accountability

- 1 What are the quality of life conditions of well-being (Results) that you want?
- 2 How will you measure them? (Indicators)
- 3 How are you doing on the measures?
- 4 What is the story behind the data?
- 5 Who are the partners with a role to play?
- 6 What works to improve the measures?
- 7 What do you propose to do?

# Maryland Child Well-Being Results

- \* Babies born healthy
- \* Healthy children
- \* Children enter school ready to learn
- \* Children are successful in school
- \* Children completing school
- \* Children safe in their families and communities
- \* Stable and economically independent families
- \* Communities that support family life

# VERMONT'S OUTCOMES

- \* Families, youth and individuals are engaged in their community's decisions and activities
- \* Pregnant women and young children thrive
- \* Children are ready for school
- \* Children succeed in school
- \* Children live in stable, supported families
- \* Youth choose healthy behaviors
- \* Youth transition to adulthood
- \* Adults lead healthy and productive lives
- \* Elders and people with disabilities live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer
- \* Communities provide safety and support for families and individuals

# United Ways

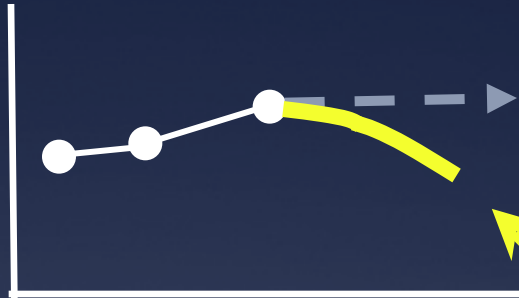
- \* Greater Lehigh Valley:
  - \* Children healthy and ready to learn
  - \* Youth succeed in school
  - \* Older adults aging successfully
  - \* Strong families and vital neighborhoods

- \* Westchester and Putnam New York:
  - \* Young children enter school prepared to achieve;
  - \* Children and youth make healthy and safe decisions;
  - \* Children and youth are academically successful

Population Accountability **Talk to Action**

Population & Result:

Indicator



Story behind the baseline

Partners

What Works

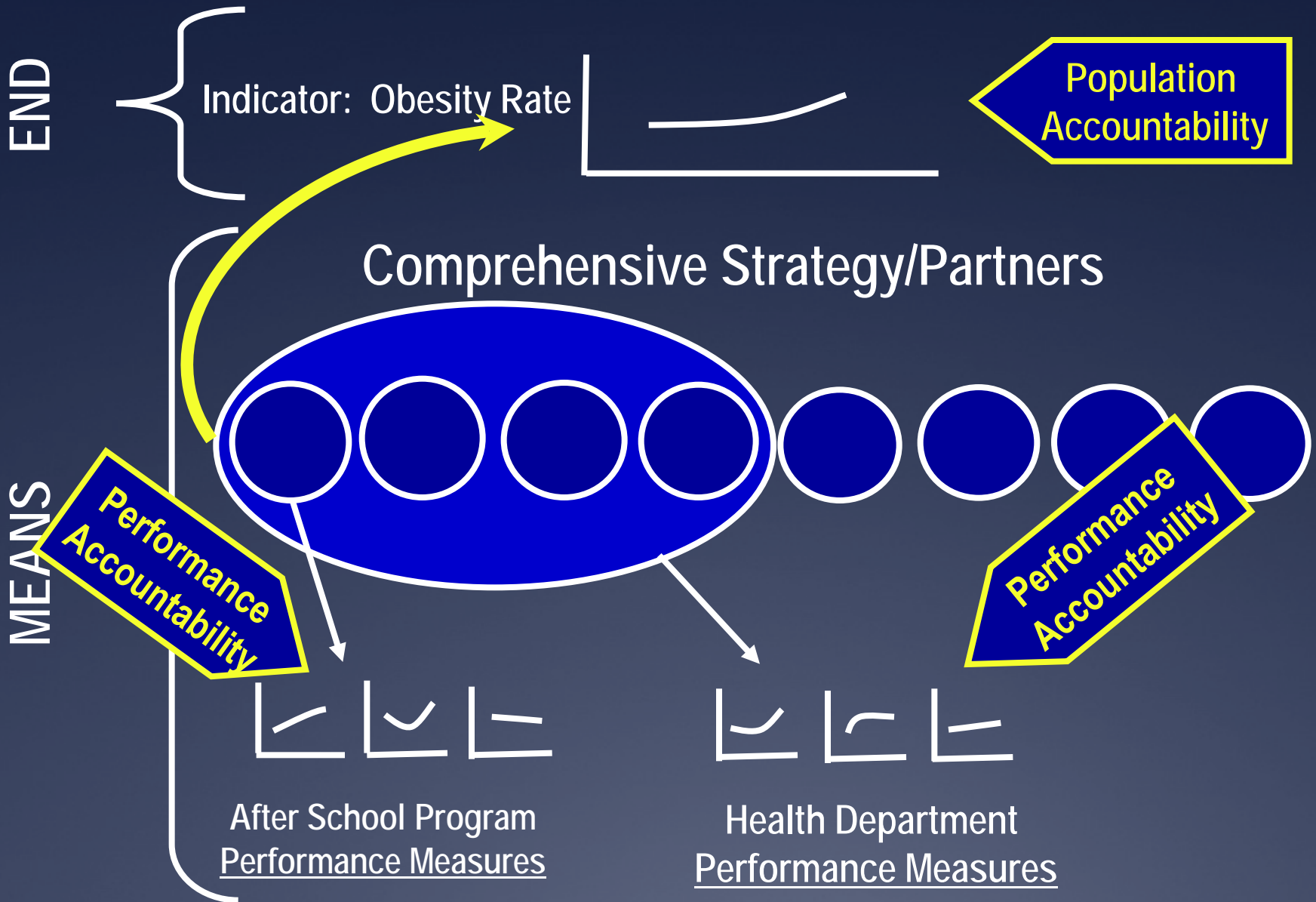
Strategy

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Start at the End

Work Backwards to Means

# Children and Youth have optimal physical and emotional health



Every time  
you make a  
presentation,  
use a  
two-part  
approach

### Population Accountability

Result: to which you contribute to most directly.

Indicators:



Story:

Partners:

What would it take?:

Your Role: as part of a larger strategy.

### Performance Accountability

Program:

Performance measures:



Story:

Partners:

Action plan to get better:

# Acknowledgements: Many of these materials draw from the work of:

- \* Mark Friedman, Founder of the Fiscal Policies Study Institute and author of "Trying Hard is Not Good Enough"
  - \* [www.raguide.org](http://www.raguide.org)
  - \* [www.resultsaccountability.com](http://www.resultsaccountability.com)
- \* Phil Lee, Founder and President of the Results Leadership Group:
  - \* [www.resultsleadership.org](http://www.resultsleadership.org)

# Other References and Interesting Reading:

- \* Edward DeBono: *Six Hats Thinking*
- \* Peter Senge (et.al): *The Fifth Discipline and the Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*
- \* Margaret Wheatley: *Finding our way: Leadership for uncertain times*
  - \* Margaret Wheatley with Myron Rogers: The uses and abuses of measurement. In: *Finding our way, Leadership for uncertain times* (p. 156-162)

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