ENHANCING PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE: LEADING AT THE INTERSECTION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND PUBLIC VALUE

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Perspective on Governance and Collaboration

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Question: does social capital impact public value?

- If so, how?

- Can collaborative action leverage social capital to effect change?

- If social capital can enhance public value, what implications might there be for public administrators?
Example: patronage of federal mission-support programs (shared services support programs or SSSP)

Market Options:
- Sometimes the market is faster, better and cheaper

Organic Options:
- Sometimes internal alternatives are best

Social Capital and Public Value:
- This case study shows that interpersonal engagement matters
Why Tackle this Issue?

Personal Reasons
- Process owner
- Program or service delivery excellence

Professional Reasons
- Enhancement of programs which support the agency’s primary science mission
- Public good as defined by the benefit to taxpayer – leveraging more public value with fewer resources via social capital
Additional Factors

- Following a needs assessment, service delivery practices were perceived to be facing a challenging problem because of reductions in budget, manpower and other resources. In addition, failure to improve the federal campus support services posed a serious problem to the dissemination of its service delivery systems (Petreski, Iliev, Gjurov, & Petreska, 2014; Rutner & Cox, 2012).
Other considerations have a bearing on this problem, among which are the lack of knowledge on effective service delivery including attitudes and behaviors related to the availability or efficiency of federal campus support programs (Bontis, Richards & Serenko, 2011; Petreski, Iliev, Gjurov, & Petreska, 2014; Nagesh & Thomas, 2015; Schulz & Brenner, 2010; USDOC, 2015). For example, personnel associated with the scientific research and development mission may not patron campus support programs, may duplicate services themselves or use commercial services simply because they do not know or understand the scope of support programs availability (Petreski, Iliev, Gjurov, & Petreska, 2014). Moreover, they may not have confidence in the support programs’ options available while having concerns about support programs range, scope, quality, costs, service distribution, and location of services (Nagesh & Thomas, 2015). Consequently, there may be additional factors to be explored to include marketing, relationship development, automation, innovation, training and support programs feedback (Schulz & Brenner, 2010).
Who Cares?

- Enhanced service delivery
- Potential cost savings to taxpayers
- Stakeholder engagement
  - Participatory action research aided commitment needed for customers and process owners to effect positive change in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors throughout cycles of transformation.
For this evaluative case study, three theories formed the basis of research as follows:

- **Shared Services Theory**, **Public Value Theory** and **Social Capital Theory**
- Overlaid with **Stringer’s PAR/LTA**
- **Stufflebeam’s CIPP Logic Model**
Methodology

- The approach utilized the relevant aspects of Schalock’s (2001) outcome-based evaluation (OBE) approach in triangulation with the logic of the case study design as described by Merriam (1998, 2002), Stake (1995), and Yin (2003).

- Stringer’s (2014) “Look, Think, and Act (LTA) Model”

- The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) Evaluation model was used for reviewing relevant documents and then collecting context-based narrative data through surveys and interviews (Mertler, 2013; Stufflebeam, 2004).
The Problem and Approach

- Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used as an approach to address the improvement of specific mission support programs that aids federal research and development campus.

- Using PAR and the Look-Think-Act (LTA) model (Stringer, 2014) program improvement initiatives may:
  - Drive changes to organizational structure
  - Establish a culture of collaboration between agencies providing services and agencies receiving services
Research Questions

- How well do mission support functions support primary scientific mission needs pertaining to research and development?
- How or in what ways can the collaborative efforts of stakeholders’ public values be enhanced so as to better contribute to the effectiveness, efficiency, and improvements of support activities?
- In what ways does social capital play a significant role in meeting or exceeding customer expectations leading to patronage of support programs?
# CIPP Logic Model

## Aim
(Support Programs, SSSP, Improvement)

### Contexts
- SSSP support primary scientific mission needs
- Research and development
- Enhancement of collaborative efforts of stakeholders’ public values
- Contribution to the effectiveness, efficiency, and improvements of the SSSP activities
- Significant role that social capital plays
- Meeting or exceeding customer expectations
- Patronage of SSSP

### Inputs
#### Activities
- Survey questionnaire
- In-depth interviews
- Document reviews
- Focus group sessions
- CIPP evaluation checklist
- Digital recording of sessions

#### Participation
- Stakeholders

### Process
#### Conduct
- Conduct document review
- Identify stakeholder participants
- Distribute surveys
- Conduct interviews
- Review results
- Create themes and categories
- Share findings with participants and evaluate meaning
- Make recommendations for change

### Product/Outcomes – Impact
- Explore stakeholder interests and perceptions resulting from data collection and analysis
- Leverage opportunities for change
- Based on outcome of study

### Assumptions
- Engagement with customers
- Opportunities for change
- Explanation and analysis of the SSSP within the R&D setting

### External Factors
- Budget constraints
- Political and institutional challenges
- Resistance to change
Key Assumptions

☐ Theoretical Assumptions
☐ Theoretical assumptions relate to the service delivery support programs meeting the mission requirements or legitimate needs of the organization; consequently, existing programs should be scrutinized within the framework of shared services theory, public value theory and social capital theory.

☐ Methodological Assumptions
☐ Methodological assumptions for this proposed study would require broad engagement with support program customers throughout the organization served in order to enable action leading to change and improve programs within the context of the environment in which they operate (Baum, et. al., 2006). Likewise, the approach included a holistic explanation and analysis of the programs within the setting of the federal R&D campus (Yin, Merriam & Stake, 2015).
Challenges and Case Study Limitations

☐ Data Collection
  ■ Recruitment, follow-up and buy-in

☐ Political and Institutional Processes
  ■ Careful coordination with on-site directors

☐ Resistance to Change
  ■ Coordination with line-office management constitutes a vertical component to the study’s execution while key stakeholder or customer coordination constitutes a horizontal component in an effort to position the study for a successful outcome.
Data Collection

- Records review initiated focus on patronage history
- Key Stakeholders were identified and recruited
- Deployed survey questionnaire, conducted in-depth interviews, focus group session, utilized CIPP evaluation checklist
- Using PAR, the cycle of review, analysis, interpretation continues
Findings

After 30 surveys, 12 interviews and one 9-person focus group: 417 comments were coded in Dedoose for qualitative data analysis. The 23 themes emerged in five categories. Stakeholder interpretation validated results and led to process improvement recommendations.
## Coding, Analysis and Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Coding Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission Support Quality</td>
<td>Stewardship of resources</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Relates to public value theory)</td>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mission perspective</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tradeoffs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of ownership</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rationale for SSSP Patronage</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Relates to social capital theory)</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Shared Services</td>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Relates to Shared Services Theory)</td>
<td>Perceived degradation or loss of services</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program effectiveness</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Process Improvement Opportunities</td>
<td>Marketing and awareness</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benchmarking</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Constraints or Challenges</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inherent capability</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manpower</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>2</td>
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## Collaborative Action for Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish SSSP improvement team</td>
<td>Study leader and key stakeholders</td>
<td>Increased buy-in</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute customer service council</td>
<td>Key stakeholders</td>
<td>Enhanced patronage</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate customers and service providers</td>
<td>Key stakeholders and service providers</td>
<td>Improved recognition and ownership</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule public event (open house, etc.)</td>
<td>Key stakeholders</td>
<td>Improved program awareness</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deploy marketing strategies</td>
<td>Key stakeholders</td>
<td>Augmented Communication</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt technological solutions for self-service capabilities</td>
<td>Key stakeholders and service providers</td>
<td>Reduced barriers to customer service</td>
<td>Winter-Spring 2018 and continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
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Conclusion

- The results of the study illustrated the value of the specific mission support programs for aiding scientific R&D operations at a federal campus.
- While adding to the body of knowledge, study results also confirm theories regarding shared services in addition to understanding how social capital impacts public value.
- The study also engaged participant stakeholders using an outcome-based evaluation in an action research setting thereby greatly enhancing study results while generating energy and enthusiasm for change.