

## Change and Continuity:

*Lessons Learned from the Bush and Obama Administrations'  
Experiences with Evaluation and Performance Measurement*

### Nicholas R. Hart

PhD Candidate, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

### Kathryn E. Newcomer

Director, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

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1

## Presentation Overview

- Provide **brief survey** of Bush and Obama Administration evaluation and performance measurement initiatives
- Highlight select **similarities and differences**
- Discuss **lessons (un)learned**

## Key Features of Bush Initiatives

- **President's Management Agenda (PMA)**
  - emphasis on human capital, competitive sourcing, electronic government, integrating budget and performance
  - Established Performance Improvement Officer (PIO) and Performance Improvement Council (PIC)
- **Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)**
  - Questions on performance goals, comparison to similar programs, and effectiveness
  - Questions about independent evaluation



## Bush: ExpectMore.gov

The screenshot shows the ExpectMore.gov website. At the top, it says "ExpectMore.gov" and "EXPECT FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO PERFORM WELL, AND BETTER EVERY YEAR." Below this is a navigation bar with a "Show Me Programs" link. The main content area is titled "DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS" and "FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT ARE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGENCY". A table titled "AGRICULTURE, PART PROGRAM RATINGS" displays the following data:

AGRICULTURE, PART PROGRAM RATINGS	
EFFECTIVE	8
MODERATELY EFFECTIVE	33
ADEQUATE	32
INEFFECTIVE	0
RESULTS NOT DEMONSTRATED	12
TOTAL PARTS COMPLETED	85

## Key Features of Obama Initiatives

- **Evaluation Capacity and Barriers**
  - Transparency and Tiered Evidence
  - Requests for Funding
  - Chief Evaluation Officers
- **Management Agenda**
  - Emphasis on customer service, shared service delivery, open data, IT delivery, strategic sourcing, financial management, real property
  - High Priority Goals and Cross Agency Goals
  - Quarterly Reviews/Strategic Reviews



## Obama: Performance.gov

A screenshot of the Obama Performance.gov website. The page features a search bar, a navigation menu, and several sections. The main content area is titled "DRIVING FEDERAL PERFORMANCE" and includes a paragraph about the Administration's approach to improving government performance. To the right, there are three "AGENCY PRIORITY GOAL" sections: "End Veteran Homelessness" (with VA.gov logo), "End Veterans homelessness" (with HUD.gov logo), and "Improve the quality of early childhood education." (with HHS.gov logo). The page also includes a footer with the text "THEMES: EDUCATION, TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, AND SOCIAL SERVICES".

## Major Similarities

- Espoused support to **delivering better results** and improving accountability but the audiences for initiatives were not clear
- PMAs for both Administrations **targeted management improvements** in similar areas (service delivery, IT, contracting, real property, etc.)
- Evaluation focus was more on Randomized Control Trials and **Impact Evaluation**
- OMB took the lead on performance management and served as corridor for implementation guidance
- Both espoused need for Chief Performance Improvement Officers but did not ensure the designated PIOs had time to devote to the function
- Neither emphasized congressional stakeholder engagement
- Neither effectively stressed linkages between performance measurement and evaluation

## Major Differences

- More emphasis in Obama initiatives on **agency flexibility** for management agenda
- Some of the Obama efforts were **“institutionalized”** in the GPRM Modernization Act of 2010
- Obama voiced support for **increasing evaluation funding and reducing barriers** –primarily in HHS, ED, and Labor.
- Bush efforts used **OMB as police** instead of a coach -- relied on OMB to help establish “stretch goals” and coordinate overall implementation
- **Obama efforts faced delays** in launching, whereas Bush efforts had specified purpose and action relatively quickly

## Lessons (un)Learned

1. **Calibrate OMB role** with agency needs
2. Establish and maintain **audience attention**
3. **Effectively implement** initiatives, with appropriate cross-agency collaboration
4. Generate and highlight **success stories**
5. Build **sufficient evaluation capacity** to support initiatives

## Lessons (un)Learned

6. **Institutionalize relationships** between performance measurement and evaluation staffs and offices
7. **Provide training** for senior managers and political appointees about leadership roles in performance measurement and evaluation
8. **Consult Congressional staff** and committees on implementation and demand for use

**Thank you!**

**Nicholas Hart**

*nrhart@gwu.edu*

**Kathryn Newcomer**

*newcomer@gwu.edu*