

Priorities of Government (POG) Overview



ESTABLISH STATEWIDE RESULTS

When Washington started its POG approach to budgeting, a team of state government and citizen executives came to consensus on a list of expected statewide results. The POG process is essentially a framework to help choose what state services best achieve these results.

Statewide Results List

- Student Achievement
- Health and Support
- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Natural Resources and Cultural/Recreational Opportunities
- Government Efficiency



IDENTIFY KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

The second step in creating the decision framework is to consider how citizens would measure success in reaching the statewide result. For example, longer life expectancy or lower incidence of disease would probably indicate to most people that the population was healthier. Similarly, high employment rates usually signal that the economy is doing well.



IDENTIFY PROVEN OR PROMISING STRATEGIES

Research and experience suggest that certain strategies are more likely to put us on the path toward achieving the identified success indicators. (At this stage, it is also important to evaluate whether currently budgeted strategies and activities accomplish what was intended.)

Role of Activities and Performance Measures

The budget is displayed as an “activity inventory”. This is a catalog of 1200+ discrete state activities, with descriptions of the service, how much it costs, who receives services, and expected outcomes. Performance measures help assess program effectiveness.



DEVELOP A RESULTS-BASED PRIORITIZATION OF ACTIVITIES

The result-indicators-strategies framework for each statewide result provides the criteria for choosing the activities that most directly accomplish the desired outcome. With limited resources, it is necessary to invest in activities that connect to chosen strategies.



USE THIS PRIORITIZATION TO INFORM FINAL BUDGET DECISIONS

Final budget decisions are influenced by state laws, funding sources, federal requirements and other factors that are difficult to change. However, the POG approach creates a unique perspective that allows decision-makers to consider evidence-based strategies and activity performance geared only toward results.

Key Benefits of POG

- Focuses budget decisions on contribution to overall results.
- Makes performance data more relevant to budget investment choices.
- Displays where the state invests its resources.