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Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-05-927](#), a report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance and Accountability, House Committee on Government Reform

Why GAO Did This Study

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 has laid a foundation of results-oriented agency planning, measurement, and reporting in the federal government. Performance planning and measurement have slowly, yet increasingly, become a part of agencies' cultures. For planning and performance measurement to be effective, federal managers need to use performance information to identify performance problems and look for solutions, develop approaches that improve results, and make other important management decisions. According to GAO's periodic surveys, federal managers reported having more performance measures in 2003 than in 1997. However, the data also showed that managers' reported use of performance information for program management activities has remained essentially unchanged from 1997 levels. GAO was asked to identify (1) how federal agencies can use performance information to make management decisions and (2) practices that can enhance or facilitate the use of performance information to make management decisions.

Technical comments from the case agencies were incorporated where appropriate.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-927.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Bernice Steinhardt at 202-512-6543 or steinhardtb@gao.gov.

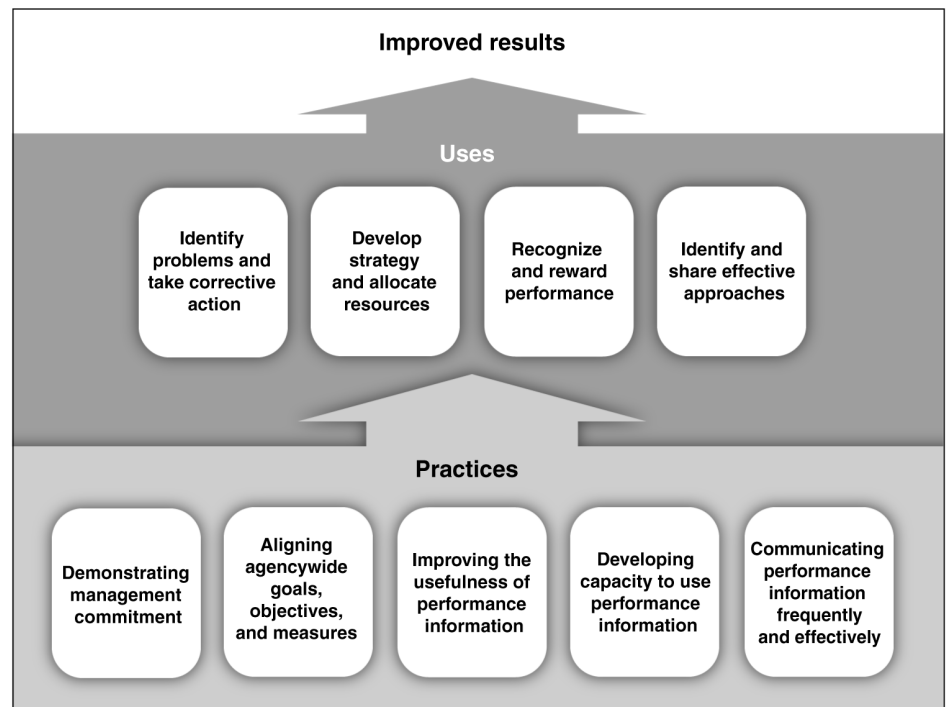
MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Enhancing Agency Use of Performance Information for Management Decision Making

What GAO Found

Agencies can use performance information to make various types of management decisions to improve programs and results. Agencies can also implement a number of practices that can enhance or facilitate the use of performance information. GAO identified four broad types of management decisions for which federal managers can use performance information and five different types of practices that can contribute to greater use of performance information. (See figure.)

Practices That Can Enhance or Facilitate the Use of Performance Information for Management Decision Making



Source: GAO.

The five federal agencies that GAO examined for this report provide examples of how agencies can use performance information for key management decisions and practices that can enhance or facilitate such use. While agencies face different management conditions and challenges and operate under different authorities, the general uses and practices highlighted in this report could be adapted by other agencies. Helpful next steps would be for agency experiences in using performance information to be more widely shared; and, for agencies to be encouraged to adapt the practices to their unique situations.