

## **Public Sector Performance Improvement**

### **1980 - 1999**

Washington state government has a long history of leading the charge in public-sector performance improvement. Leadership engagement and ongoing investment in performance management systems and tools reflects a state government culture committed to delivering better results.

#### **1980s**

The Efficiency Commission was a bipartisan board established in statute in the 1980s that was chaired by Gov. Booth Gardner and included members of the legislature, labor, and business. Staffed by the Office of Financial Management, the commission took on cost-saving projects, like centralizing the state motor pool, as well as personnel management and budget improvement projects. The commission enacted a budgeting system that could track based on activities and performance, and helped move state agencies overall in the direction of quality improvement.

#### **Early 1990s**

After Mike Lowry was elected Governor in 1992, the Efficiency Commission was sunset and the state legislature established the Washington Performance Partnership Council, a 12-member body comprised of Gov. Lowry and state elected officials, to set statewide performance measures around customer service, cost-effectiveness, and productivity. Agencies also began using performance measures to better allocate resources, budget and request funding, and assess and realign agency priorities. This approach was first implemented systematically by Washington state agencies in the 1994 legislative session for the 1995-97 biennial budget per [Senate Bill 6601](#).

#### **Late 1990s**

While the Performance Partnership Council was eliminated by the legislature in 1996, the executive branch under Gov. Gary Locke went on to adopt performance tools, like the Balanced Scorecard quality improvement initiative to measure progress and the Malcolm Baldrige criteria to help drive change. These tools were promoted by the governor's office, and agencies were encouraged to incorporate the tool into their performance efforts.