Measuring Competencies of Information Professionals

by

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1. The Significance of Measurement & Evaluation

We cannot manage what we cannot measure.

**John Young, former CEO, Hewlett-Packard**

❖ **A very important part of managerial functions,**

❖ **Managers need to know the performance of staff,**

❖ **Good performance needs rewards,**
poor one needs corrections & improvements,

❖ **Accountability of every task is necessary,**

❖ **Managers are responsible for staff performance.**

Why do we evaluate?

- **Good decision-making need data & evidences.**
- **Allocating resources.**
- **Reward good performances.**
- **Correct mistakes; avoid past mistakes.**
- **Improve performances.**
- **Plan for better future.**
- **Select the better and the best.**
- **Compare with the best.**
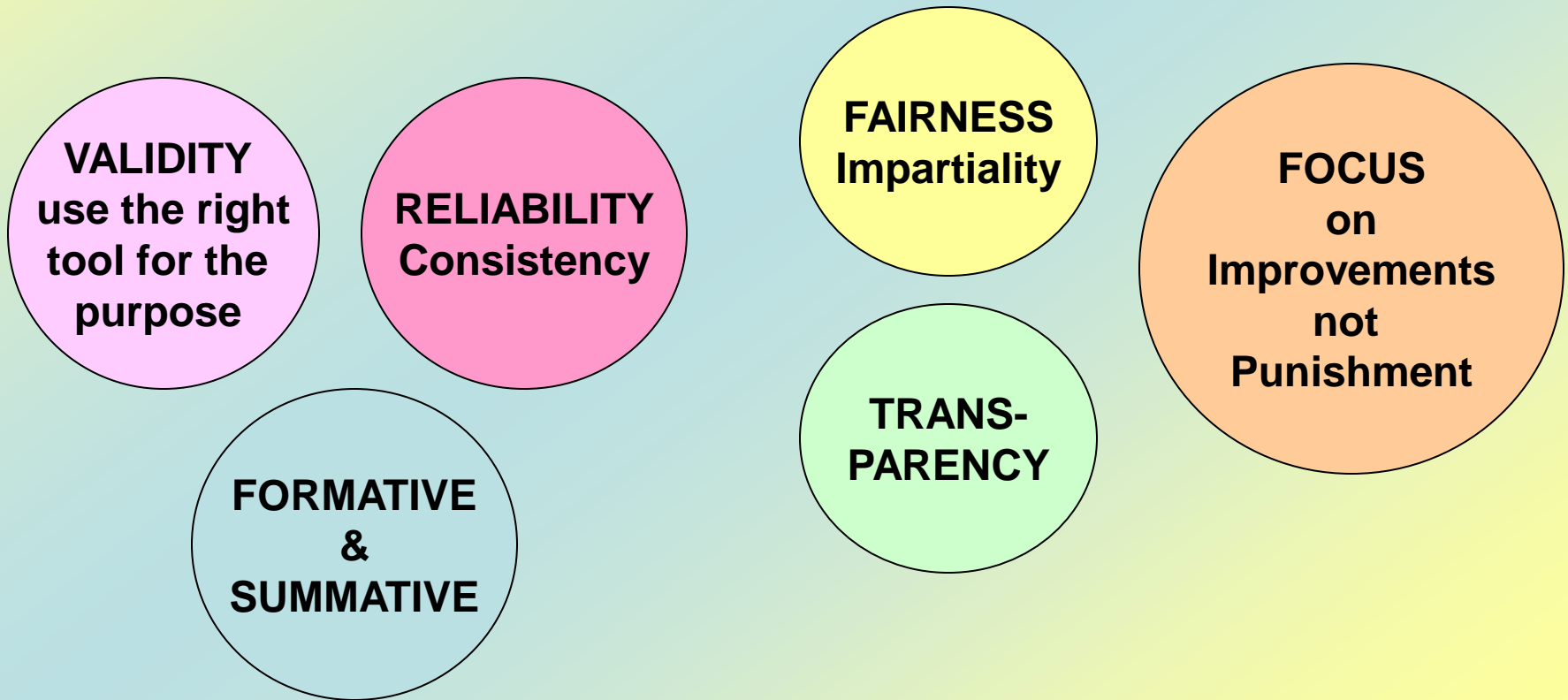- **Strive to do better.**
- **…………………………**

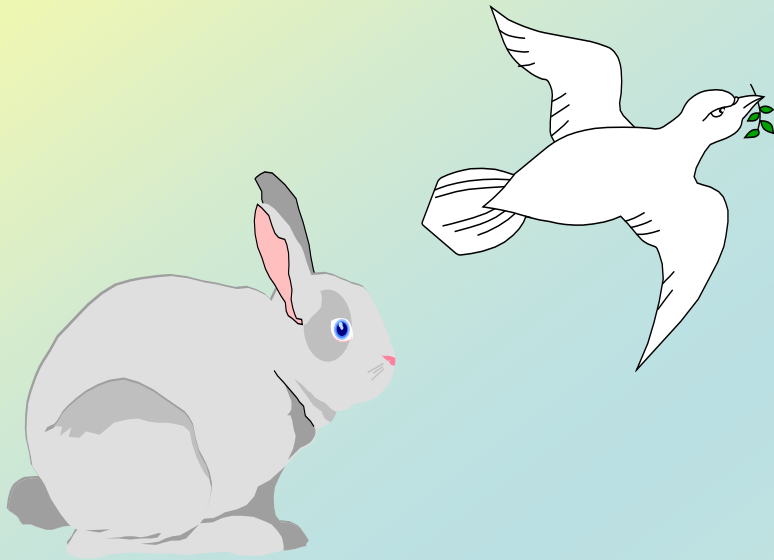# Functions of management
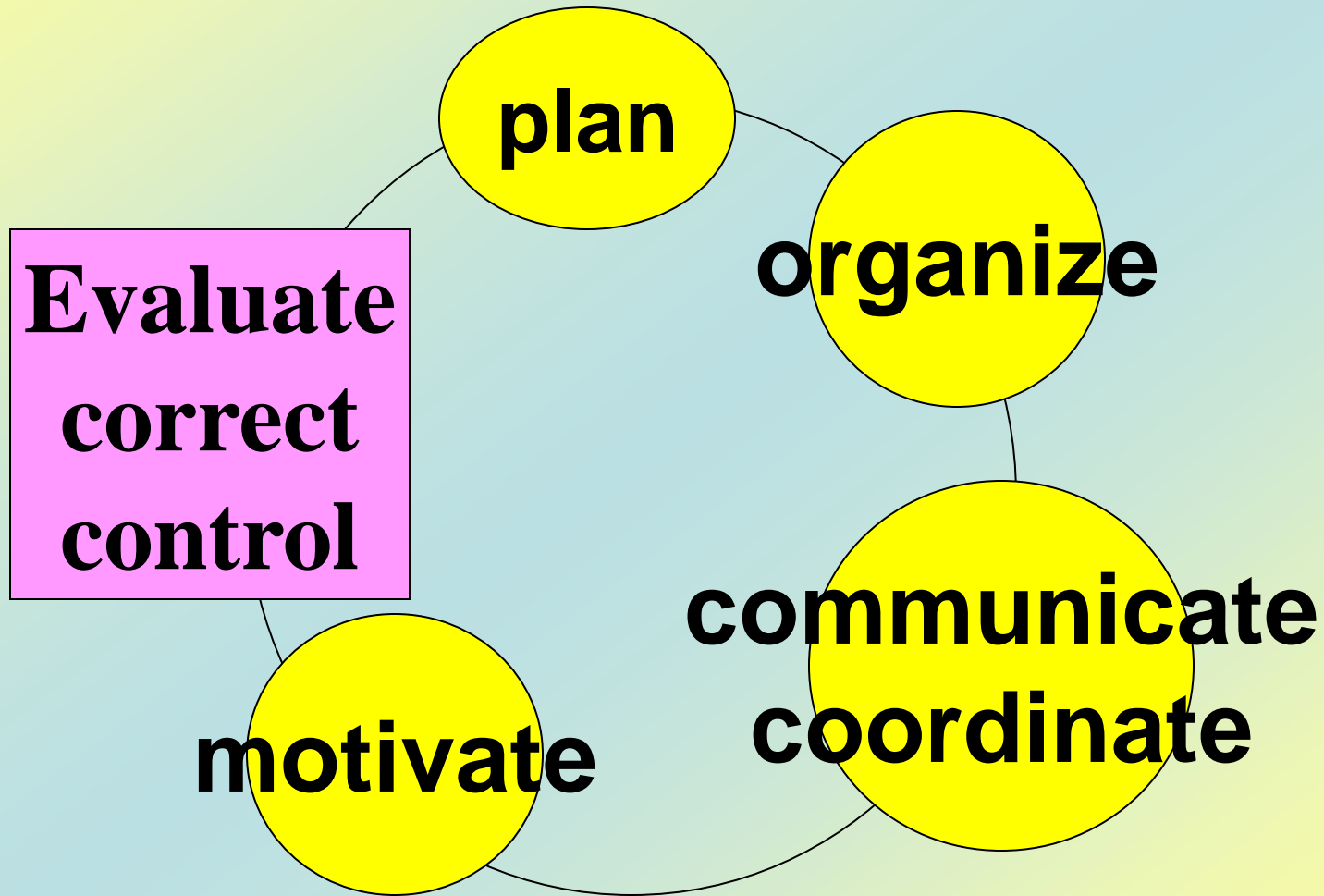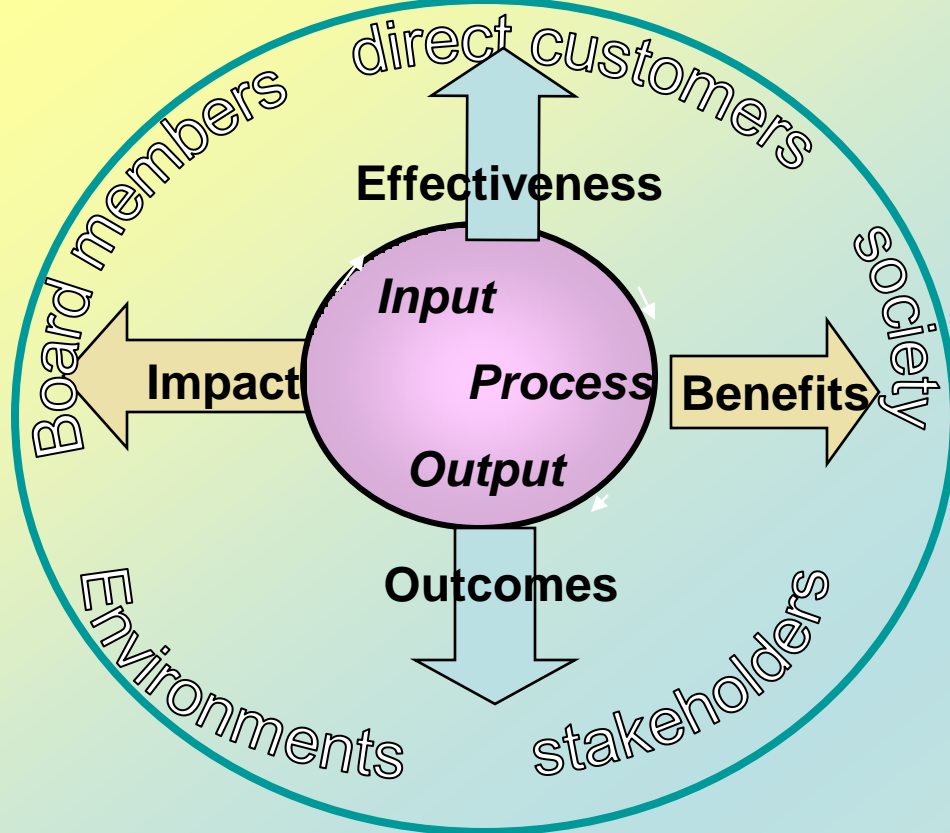
The library within the context of society

- Performance measurement & evaluation is an essential management tool.
- It may be implemented in a variety of ways.
- It is multidimensional in nature.
- Each method has advantages as well as disadvantages.

2. Principles in Measurement & Evaluation

- **Both an art and a science.**

- **Evaluation-** **an art of applying the science of measurement tools & techniques** **to make decisions affecting people's performance, status and future career.**

VALIDITY
use the right tool for the purpose

RELIABILITY
Consistency

FAIRNESS
Impartiality

FOCUS
on Improvements not Punishment

FORMATIVE & SUMMATIVE
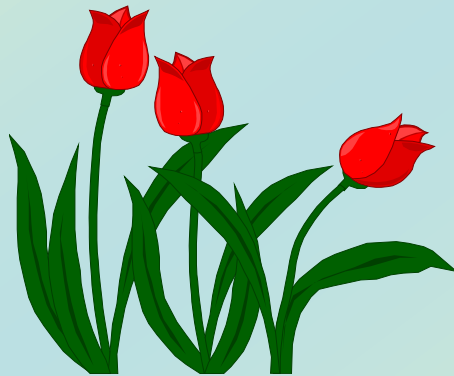
TRANS-PARENCY

Validity

- **Appropriate for the function**
- **Does what is supposed to do**
- **Usable for the purpose**

Is it valid to compare a rabbit with a bird?

Reliability
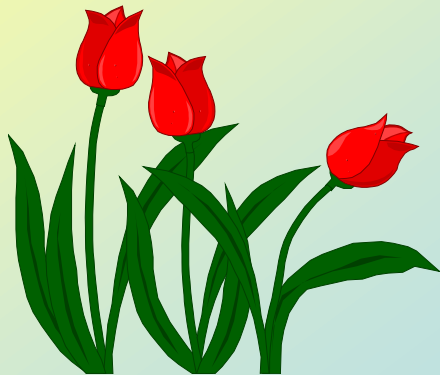
- **You can trust it to act/ behave the way you expect.**
- *Can be replicated and obtain results similar to the original.*
- **Consistency**
- *Replicability*

General vs. Specific

- *He is a good man.*
  - •Gives 10% income to charity
    •Active in PIBG
    •Spends time with family
    •Loves to read & share knowledge
    •Helps neighbors

3. COMPETENCY: Definitions

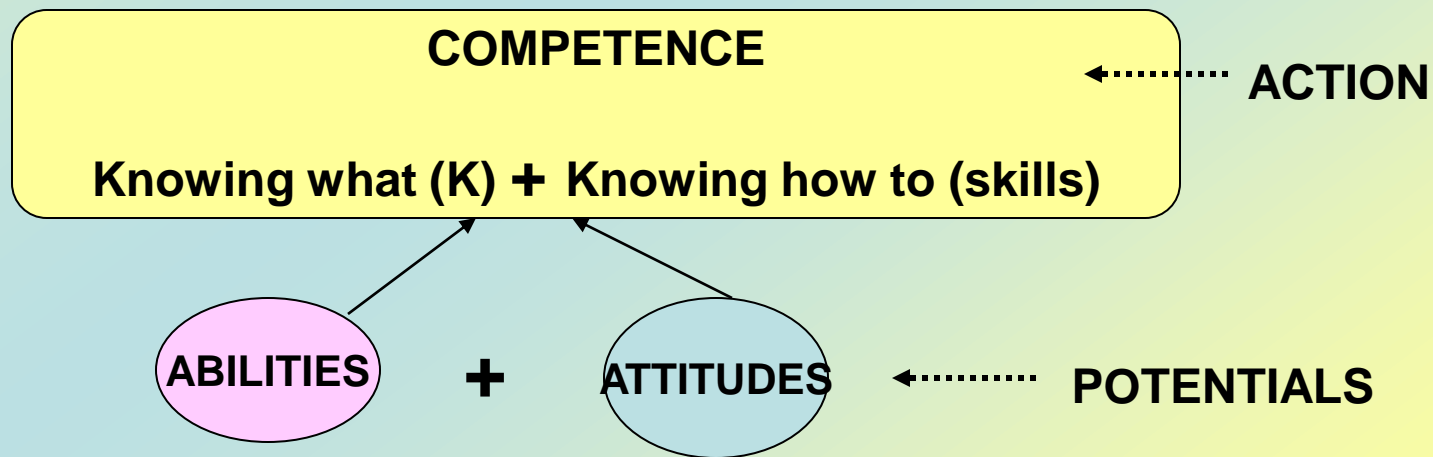1.   The generic knowledge, skills, or attitude of a person, related to effective behavior as demonstrated through performance.

2.   A behavior, or set of behaviors that describe excellent performance in a particular work context.

3. One's faculty of doing things appropriately, based on one's abilities. ABILITY – inherent resources, intellectual & physical in humans which may be actualised in everyday practices.

COMPETENCE ←········· **ACTION**

Knowing what (K) + Knowing how to (skills)

ABILITIES **+** **ATTITUDES** ←········· **POTENTIALS**

No shortage of literature on competencies,
Very few studies on Measuring Competencies.

Norliya Ahmad Kassim. 2003's study among 125 MSC status companies

Personal Qualities – **Responsible & reliable**
Works well with others in a team

KM competencies – **Internet technologies skills**
Able to manage value-added information
Able to acquire, retrieve, analyse & disseminate

Managerial skills – **Able to solve problems**
Business analysis skills

Communication – **Able to communicate research findings**
Speak & write English proficiently
Creative skills & use of graphic software

Rehman's Study 1997: Special Library Professionals in Malaysia

Competencies for first entry level professionals:
50 Top & Middle managers of special libraries & info. agencies

FOUNDATION KNOWLEDGE

1. Structure of organ. & the role of info. service in the organ.
2. Proactive info. services
3. Establish vitality of info services in the eyes of top executives & key R&D personnel
4. Collection & related resources
5. Mission, goals, objectives of the organ.
6. Policies & procedures affecting info.
7. Basic subject concepts & terminology used in primary areas of users

……………………………

19. Planning, decision making, problem-solving, organising, marketing, budgeting & cost analysis…

FOUNDATION SKILLS

1. Organisation of materials
2. Info. Outreach, current awareness
3. Use of ICT
4. Working in teams
5. Info. Manipulating & packaging
6. Time management
7. Abstracting
8. Data gathering, analysis
9. Newspaper clippings & press releases
10. Planning, decision-making, problem-solving, budget preparation, fiscal mgt.
11. Supervising, assigning, organizing, monitoring, directing, appraising, reporting……………

18. Editing & publishing

4. Measuring Competencies

- Measuring competencies is just a portion of the whole integrated scheme of Performance Management (PM).

- PM is a process that includes planning, managing, motivating, evaluating & rewarding performance.

ACTION PLAN:

1. Identify the desired outcomes of every task. One task at a time.

2. Identify the level of competencies:
beginner, middle / supervisory, manager, leader.

3. Prioritize: 'need to have', 'nice to have'.

4. Each staff understands what is expected / desired outcomes.

5. Individuals & teams align their behavior to meet expectations.

6. Establish SMART objectives for each task.

MISSION / VISION

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIES

PROGRAMS

ACTIVITIES

EVALUATE/MEASURE

IT system executive

Expected outcomes

Specific	1. **Users have 24 x 7 access to online information without breakdown.**
Measurable	2. **Ensure security of data at all time.**
Achievable	3. **Implement user-friendly interface, enabling fast access.**
Realistic	4. **Provide training & assist users in efficient use of new applications.**
Time-based	

- *What are the knowledge and skills needed to achieve the above results?*

- *What instruments to be used for measuring performance accurately?*

- *What rewards are given when the outcomes are achieved?*

- *What actions are taken when outcomes are not achieved?*

ILL manager – expected outcomes

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Realistic

Time-based

1. Users have the requested items within 3 days (in Malaysia) / within 10 days (from overseas).

2. Establish & maintain good working relationship with other libraries / info. Agencies.

3. Conduct research on ILL users' satisfaction & quality service.

4. Train subordinates in courtesy & efficient customer service twice a year.

5. Plan and manage budget for ILL.

- *What are the knowledge and skills needed to achieve the above results?*

- *What instruments to be used for measuring performance accurately?*

- *What rewards are given when the outcomes are achieved?*

- *What actions are taken when outcomes are not achieved?*

Goal: Save the time of the reader

- **Inputs and processes**
1. Materials are shelved & located at the right place.
2. Provide clear, accurate & simple signage to assist users.
3. Provide users-friendly manuals.
4. Have ILL service within 3 days.
5. Implement user-friendly OPAC.
6. etc……

5. CHALLENGES

- • **Measurement is a science - accuracy, specificity, reliability, validity.**

- • **Evaluation is an art of applying the science of measurement in the performance of people / product / services.**

- ➢ **Evaluation is a political activity; hence many critics & debates.**
  - ➢ **Communication & understanding among staff are critical.**
  - ➢ **The overall goal, mission & objectives of the organisation need to be appreciated by staff.**
- ➢ **Each staff must be accountable for the outcomes of the given task.**

- ▪ **Transparency & Good Governance are needed.**

- ▪ **Reduce subjectivity: use evidences and data in decision-making.**

Priority of Service
(users' survey - Broadbent 1993)

1. **Provision of** up-to-date **books, journals, and other information sources**
2. Quality of information services and products (reliability, **currency**, etc.)
3. **Inter-library loan service**
4. **Timely** delivery of products and services
5. **Understanding of users' information needs**
6. Access to databases (online and CD-ROM)
7. **Quality of staff assistance and support to users**
8. Range of material in collection (e.g. subject areas)
9. **Gaining top management support**
10. Servicing all sections of the Department
11. **Competence and qualifications of staff**

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Thank you for your attention
& response