What makes a good metric?

It actually matters

- As close to an outcome that customers/citizens actually care about.
- Non-outcomes are okay if there is strong evidence of a clear link between the metric and the outcome.
- If there isn’t, then invest in demonstrating that link.
- Avoids perverse outcomes – think about the harm that a strong focus on the metric can have elsewhere.
- If the harm is minimal, or acceptable, that’s okay.
- If not, think about ways to mitigate against it in the way the metric is designed.

Data supports decision making

- The metric is easy to understand – makes intuitive sense.
- Avoid composite indices unless they are easy to understand.
- Data is available to those responsible for implementation, so they can use it to understand the drivers of performance and ways to maximize impact in real time.
- Data is available at regular intervals so leaders can make course-correcting decisions.
- Data is reliable enough – all data is dirty and has gaps and inconsistencies, but they are not so great that decision makers can’t rely on data to guide their work.
- Data can be rolled up to see the overall picture,
- Data can be disaggregated to allow for deeper analysis of drivers of performance (e.g., by geography, population, type of issue, etc.)
- There is baseline and/or historic data which allow a deeper understanding of trends and drivers of performance.

Feasible to collect

- Data is not costly to obtain.
- Data collection is automated where possible.
- Data is verifiable – so that someone can go back and check accuracy easily.

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