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Reform Newsletter



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*“Stepping towards a
Sustainable
Montserrat.”*

STRENGTHENING THE PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We have a dream—a dream that the Government of Montserrat will strengthen its Public Service Management System. A dream of addressing the weaknesses that were highlighted in the Fiduciary Risk Assessment and the Public Expenditure Financial Accountability assessment conducted earlier this year. Not only that, but we dream of a modernized, efficient, responsive and accountable public service; one with a transparent and effective accountability framework as outlined in Strategic Goal #4 of the Sustainable Development Plan. How will this dream be realized? There are three answers to this question, all of which the Government of Montserrat will be undertaking.

The Answers

- The introduction of a tailor made Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) approach for Montserrat which properly aligns the core government management processes through the annual cycle of planning and resource allocation;
- The streamlining and a restatement of the structure of GoM and specific roles/responsibilities in relation to core management processes; and

- The design and implementation of a comprehensive GoM-wide performance management system which ensures that performance reporting is integrated and coordinated across GoM.

A Strengthened Performance Management System (PSMS)

The central focus of the PSMS is that performance must be defined as the results of our efforts. The components of the system focuses on Policy and Strategic Management, Improved service delivery, enabling economic development, Public Financial and Economic Management, Human Resource Management and Development, and IT/E- Government.

At the heart of the strengthened PSMS is a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). MTEF is a government strategic policy and expenditure framework. It is part of a transparent planning and budget process where government agrees to policy priorities, allocates resources to sectors according to these priorities and adds a forward looking (medium-term) dimension to the annual budget process. It is a tool for good public expenditure management—a tool that will address the fiscal challenges of

STRENGTHENING THE PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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an unplanned deficit that the Government of Montserrat is currently experiencing.

The introduction of the MTEF approach means that every assumption about what is done in the public service, why, and how, can be challenged, and must be justified in terms of results. There will be rigorous prioritization of all proposed activities and expenditure requests.

In addition to the MTEF approach, great care will be taken in institutionalizing a consistent understanding of a performance based public service culture and in significantly strengthening the human resource

management function to ensure that it effectively enables improved performance.

The strengthened PSMS will include a comprehensive performance and results focus. The elements of the system will be appropriately sequenced, seamlessly linked, and mutually reinforcing. There will be a completely integrated policy and performance framework from the top (national vision and strategic goals) to bottom (staff objectives and targets). Resources and capacity will determine what can be planned since budget ceilings will be clear at the start, and all activities will be costed. As a result, decisions about what to do and what

not to do will be more informed.

This strengthened PSMS builds upon the previous, Performance Management System. It was adopted by Exco on 21st July 2010 and the MTEF approach will be introduced for the 2011-14 budget cycle. Implementation will be led by the Financial Secretary and an MTEF Team with members from across the public service. This challenging but achievable aim is an important first step towards attaining one of our dreams—fiscal sustainability.

**Over 40 years
of Public Service
RIP
JOSEPH H. MEADE**

GOVERNMENT OF MONTSERRAT'S HR STRATEGY

The HR Strategy sets out the Government of Montserrat's (GoM) plans to ensure the recruitment, development and retention of employees to meet its strategic goals. The Human Resources Management Unit (HRMU) will reform its processes and systems in order to provide a modern and efficient service. Areas of development include: service delivery, organisation design, strategic planning and change management, workforce planning, succession planning & talent management and learning & development.

The new HR structure aims to focus on fixing and developing processes and policies which support the organization; service delivery to line ministries and depart-

ments; and establishing career development paths for employees.

HRM changes envisioned are:

- PSC becoming a monitoring/audit body such that line managers start taking responsibility for day to day people management
- Streamlined recruitment process – open and merit based process for all positions
- Effective arrangements for mobility and career development (transfers, secondment, acting arrangements)
- Pay and rewards appropriately aligned to skills and performance

- Enforcing performance standards and disciplinary arrangements
- Effective allocation and monitoring of headcount and staffing costs

- Implementation of the Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS)

Transitional arrangements or next steps include improving communication to the rest of the organization; the redefinition of roles and ensuring effective handover; evaluation and grading of new and changed roles and the implementation of PSC regulations and implementation of revised General Orders.

THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: A RENEWED FOCUS ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



Personal Development is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and experience for the purpose of enhancing your performance and self-perception.

How can you experience personal development as it relates to your job? The first thing you must do is to identify the requirements of the post. What skills, experience and knowledge do you need to get the job done? Of that list, identify which ones you don't possess and/

or which areas need to be improved. After answering that question the final step is to identify what options you may have for improving/developing your competencies. Here are some of those options.

1. Learning from Reading, Research and Studying

Browse the Internet and do a Google search of any topic of your choice and you will find a wealth of information to get you started. Reading books and journals is a smart way to gain a wide array of knowledge about particular topics. Pursuing formal qualifications is yet another option. As a Public Officer you may qualify for assistance, especially if your area of study is on the Government of Montserrat's priority list. Call the Performance Management and Development Unit today at 491-9202 for more information.

2. Learning from Others

Why not learn from the people around you? For example, your coworkers, supervisors and from other public officers across the service. Some of the avenues of learning from others are: mentoring, shadowing, coaching, through exchange visits and internal learning groups, and/or by joining an external network.

3. Learning from Experience

Believe it or not, you can learn from merely trying out something new. This is why supervisors are encouraged to delegate special projects to their officers, to have workers seconded to another role and to rotate jobs.

Our Performance Management System is particularly concerned with the training and development of officers. This is why we encourage workers to be more proactive with their personal development.



Development Training Workshops

YOU'RE FINISHED WITH TH

Introduction

Work planning is the first step of the Government of Montserrat's (GoM's) Staff Performance Management System. If you recall a work plan is an agreement between you and your immediate supervisor as to what work deliverables you are responsible for, based on agreed measures.

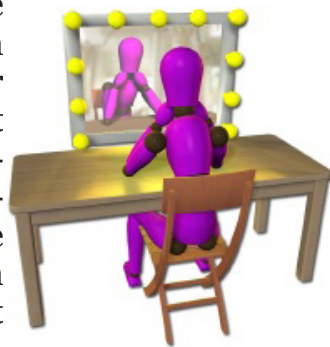


So, your work plan is completed. You and your supervisor have agreed on the outputs and measures. You have submitted the final draft to your supervisor. Now what?

The second phase of GoM's Staff Performance Management System is Monitoring.

To Officers...

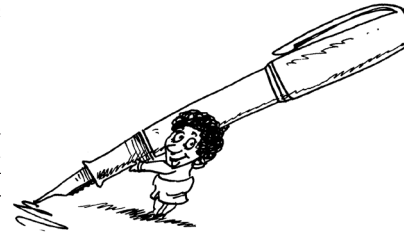
As officers you are responsible for self-monitoring. Are you meeting or exceeding targets? Are you on schedule and meeting key deadlines as outlined in your work plan? Are you communicating with your supervisor to find out whether or not the department's focus has shifted? If not, take some time out and do some self assessment. Even more so, speak to your supervisor and request assistance and training if needed. Remember, this Performance Management System encourages consistent communication!



To Supervisors...

As supervisors it is very important that you make a mental note of your officers' deliv-

erables and deadlines. Follow up with officers and be sure to keep a log. Some ways to monitor performance are through group meetings, one-on-one meetings, through observation and even by noting feedback from customers. You may also request that officers submit monthly/quarterly reports of their progress. By monitoring officers' performances you will become knowledgeable of the current status of work deliverables, reduce errors and conflicts and even have a reference for the end of year review.



Giving Feedback

It is not enough to merely monitor. Monitoring without giving feedback is a recipe for disaster. Officers, be sure to share any concerns and/or difficulties that you may be facing in your work with your supervisor and request training and assistance if needed.

Supervisors, encourage officers and let them know when they are doing well.

That is key to sustaining good performance. But what if officers are not doing well? It is equally important that you let them know this. However, bear in mind that there are right and wrong ways to say something.



Is your feedback...

- Regular?
- Based on verifiable information?
- Constructive and not judgemental?
- Related to agreed targets?
- Encourage dialogue on how it is

THE WORK PLAN: NOW WHAT?

received?

- Help sustain good performance?

If you answered yes to all of the above questions, then you are definitely on your way to building a strong and mutually rewarding relationship with your officers.

Feedback Exercise

Here are examples of negative feedback. On the lines provided, please write the corrections. Be sure to pay attention to the feedback checklist on the left.

Supervisor to Officer: "John you are always late to work"

Supervisor to Officer: "Sarah, I am sick and tired of your reports being filled with errors"

Officer to Supervisor: "Mr. Simpson you give me way too much work. I am not a robot!"

Coworker to Coworker: "Lewis your radio is up too loud. Turn it down."

Officer to Customer: "Mr. Moses, you have to pay duty. No duty, no goods!"

DWI
fined?

SOLUTIONS TO FEEDBACK EXERCISE

The Supervisor merely told John that he was always late for work. There are several things wrong with this. For one, it is not specific and maybe not even accurate. I'm sure that at least once, John was on time. The way to correct this is to be more specific about how many times John was late, refer to attendance log or other form of evidence and continue by inquiring as to whether there is a problem. Remember, feedback should always encourage dialogue.

If I were Sarah I would be very upset. Be very careful with your tone when giving feedback. Remember, feedback should be done in a way as allowed to be rude to them. Simply

showing Sarah what her errors were, and how to correct them would be a good starting point. Officers, always remember to be respectful when speaking with Supervisors. If you feel that your workload is too much be sure to relay this to Supervisors in a respectable way, and make a strong case based on evidence as to why the work is too much. Always remember that feedback should be based on verifiable information.

Not because someone is your coworker means that you are allowed to be rude to them. Simply

Improved customer service is at the heart of the Performance Management System. When giving feedback to customers be as professional and patient as humanly possible. Explain to customers why things are being done the way they are. "Mr. Moses I know you are not happy with paying duty, however, in order to have a healthy economy we must collect taxes. I too am responsible for paying duty."

A STEP UP TO EGOVERNANCE

In these times where the computer has seemingly become man's best friend coupled with the fact that we are living in an information age, it is imperative that the Government of Montserrat (GoM) modernize and improve its operational efficiency and effectiveness through the use of technology. As such, GoM is striving towards operating in an eGovernment environment in which most of its business is transacted electronically and services are delivered to citizens through multiple channels.



What exactly is eGovernment?

eGovernment is short for “Electronic Government”. It is also referred to as the following: e-gov, Digital Government, Online Government, Connected Government and Transformational Government. Simply put, eGovernment is the creation of a comfortable, and transparent interaction between Government and citizens (G2C), Business Enterprises (G2B), and other Governments (G2G). There are four domains of eGovernment namely, governance, information and communication technology (ICT), business process re-engineering (BPR) and e-citizen.

Is eGovernment really needed in Montserrat, especially given how small the island is—both in size and demographics? We will let you decide! Here is some information that will nudge you in the right direction. Although the public service is often labeled as inefficient and ineffective in service delivery, the issues generally are not necessarily about people, but more so as a result of old paper-based systems, poor information management systems and working systems that are not integrated enough to support routine processes and faster decision making. Most of these systems-oriented issues can be overcome with the re-engineering of business processes and the development of end-to-end integrated systems. In essence, eGovernance is key to improved service delivery and operational efficiency. It is for this purpose that the government of Montserrat will be implementing an eGovernment Strategy.

The Government of Montserrat's eGovernment Strategy has four main objectives which are:

1. To improve public service management by operating electronically through improved business processes enabled by ICTs and by using secure, reliable and available ICT infrastructure, systems and applications.
2. To meet customers' needs, by connecting with them through multiple channels while reducing paper work, duplicated processes and long wait cycles. Also, by delivering one-stop services and meeting high service standards in a secure environment.
3. To encourage a safe and cohesive society, through implementing broadband connectivity between Montserrat and the rest of the world. This objective will also be achieved by establishing ICT-enabled business continuity measures to mitigate risks created by natural/manmade disasters and by promoting knowledge-exchange among Montserratians, including the Diaspora.
4. To strengthen linkages with the Caribbean Region by building and using interoperability features in systems identified by GoM as priority areas for functional cooperation across the region. Not only that, but also by cooperating in the development of common institutional and ICT infrastructure and systems for use across the region.



Now the question remains, “How can, or will Montserrat benefit from eGovernance”? The answer is quite simple. Having a modern public service working in an eGovernment environment would present Montserrat as a desired location for foreign investment and result in accelerated economic development on island. Additionally, globalization has had a profound effect on all business processes. Montserrat, even though small has to keep up with the ever changing technological developments so as to remain effective/current in the global market place.

There are some other benefits of eGovernance that will be unique to Montserrat. For instance, the public service provides employment to over 1000 persons—a large portion of the households in Montserrat. This is a unique situation in Montserrat. The modernization of the public service, because of its size, would therefore also create a modernized Montserrat!

How difficult would it be to move towards eGovernance? The answer: not as difficult as it could’ve been. For one, GoM is already operating in some form of eGovernment mode supported by the Department of Information Technology and eGovernment Services (DITES, formerly GIS) and is in transition towards reaching a more advanced version of eGovernment. For example, all office based government employees have a computer, use email, and communicate electronically to some extent and GoM has web presence and uses ICTs in several administrative and mission-critical business functions such as immigration and taxation. Secondly, the work completed and planned by the Public Service Reform Unit (PSRU) provides a strong base for launching the eGovernment program.

There is a legitimate concern that the automation of business processes would create a loss of jobs. Although this may happen in a limited fashion in 3-5 years, in the short term, it is not likely to result in loss of jobs for current employees. The emphasis would be largely on re-skilling and regrouping of public service employees for creating effective organizations. This would create opportunities for newly skilled employees to become employable in the private sector and for some of the newly skilled retirees to provide services to government as private sector consultants and contractors. In addition, it is anticipated that with the modernization of the public service, new job opportunities would emerge due to increased economic activity.

GOVERNMENT OF MONTSERRAT’S STEP TOWARDS EGOVERNANCE IS A STEP UP!



THE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer service really is as easy as ABC. Practice the attitudes and skills below and you will find that you will love your job more and your customers will love you too!

A is for **APPROACHABLE!** Your customers want to deal with someone who they can approach for anything.

B is for **BEING** the **BEST** you can BE!

C is for **COMPETENCE!** Strive to develop the competencies required for your job.

D is for **DOING** it right the first time!

E is for **EXPECTATIONS!** Customers should know the who, what, when, where and why of your department

F is for **FAITHFULNESS!** Be faithful in performing the little tasks.

G is for **GOVERNMENT!** You are a part of Government.

H is for **HELPFUL!** Customers appreciate it when public servants are willing to lend a helping hand.

I is for continuous **IMPROVEMENT!** We can improve ourselves daily. We are all works-in-progress.

J is for **JOB SATISFACTION!** If you are happy with your job, it shows.

K is for **KNOWLEDGEABLE!** Familiarise yourself with the operations of your entire department. You can never know too much!

L is for **LISTENING!** Listen actively to your customer queries. Look beyond the obvious and respond to their needs.

M is for **MEASURE!** Evaluate your own performance. Put yourself in the place of your customer. Would you like to deal with you?

N is for **NEVER** saying **NO** to a customer! Always provide them with an alternative.

O is for an **OPPORTUNITY!** Seize the moment and make your customers feel appreciated.

P is for **POLITE!** 'Please', 'Thank You' and 'I'm Sorry' can go a long way. It shows that you care about people.

Q is for **QUALITY!** Provide quality service to your customers.

R is for **RESPECT!** Respect the rights and opinions of every customer who enters your department.

S is for **SMILE!** Greet every customer with a smile, even when speaking on the telephone; it is a universal message. It lets customers know they are welcome and that their business is important to you.

T is for **TIMELINESS!** Establish realistic turnaround times so that customers always know what to expect.

U is for **UNDERSTANDING!** Customers welcome it when you display thoughtfulness and consideration.

V is for **VOICE!** Speak clearly, pleasantly, and at a good pace. Your

customers will thank you!

W is for a **WORK PLAN!** Having a well thought out work plan allows you to be more efficient and effective.

X is for **EXCEPTIONAL** service! Go the extra mile to help a customer.

Y is for **"WHY?"** Customers want to know that you have the answers! If you don't, promise to find out or recommend them to someone who does.

Z is for **ZEAL!** It is contagious. When you have zeal, zest, enthusiasm and passion, it shows! The more positive your attitude, the more favourable persons will speak of the Montserrat Public Service.

Aim to be the best that you can be.

Rise to the occasion

Results are the sum of our efforts

Opportunities come when we least expect them

Work smart, not hard as we rebuild our nation.

R.I.P
Alphonus "Arrow" Cassell
1949-2010

FOLLOW THE ARROW

