The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Network Mini-Guide Series:
MEASURING PERFORMANCE OF CJCCs

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By: Marea Beeman and Aimee Wickman

Over the past several years, transparency in government has become increasingly important both in terms of promoting public trust and confidence in government agencies and to demonstrate fiscal responsibility. A key strategy for creating transparency is performance measurement—establishing quantifiable benchmarks against which the progress toward goals and objectives of an organization can be assessed. Within local criminal justice systems, performance measurement is no easy task. Agencies within the system can be hesitant to establish measures, and there are often competing interests and goals between the various agencies within the system, which makes it difficult to establish system-wide measures. As planning and policy bodies, local criminal justice coordinating councils face a dual challenge in measuring their performance. First, their role promoting system-wide coordination suggests they should create and promote use of system-wide performance measures. Second, as organizations themselves, coordinating councils have their own organizational goals and objectives to be measured.

Leaders of criminal justice coordinating committees (CJCCs)[1] have a fairly good sense of how to measure outcomes of programs and projects they are pursuing to improve the criminal justice system. They can be less certain how to measure the performance of a CJCC itself. A discussion among members of the National Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Network[2] revealed that, for many CJCCs, their goals and objectives focused on improvements to intra- and inter-system communication and collaboration but there was little understanding of how best to establish measures for these phenomena. This Mini Guide offers guidance on how CJCCs can measure the extent to which members are communicating and collaborating. By creating and implementing these types of performance measures, CJCCs not only create transparency and demonstrate their value but can also provide additional insight to the relative success of projects being undertaken across the criminal justice system. This mini-guide seeks to provide a general understanding of measuring performance through these types of organizations, what is happening in local jurisdictions around performance measurement, and several specific examples of how to gain feedback from organization members.

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[1] "Criminal justice coordinating council," or CJCC, is the term used in this paper to refer the full array of informal and formal committees known by a variety of names across the United States that provide a forum for key justice system agency officials and other general government officials to address criminal justice system issues.

[2] This Mini-Guide Series is being presented by The Justice Management Institute as part of the National Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Network project. For more information, please visit: www.jmijustice.org.

Why Measure Performance?

Primarily, performance measures provide feedback on how well CJCCs are achieving their goals. The ability to gauge effectiveness allows a CJCC to make adjustments to better achieve optimal performance. Secondary benefits of performance measures include helping to use scarce resources appropriately, promoting public trust and confidence, and identifying and promoting best practices.

Where do Performance Measures Come From?

Performance measures flow from an organization's vision and mission. What is the goal of the CJCC? What does it intend to do, and what is the desired long-term impact? The steps taken to achieve those goals can be quantified and measured.

The goal of a CJCC is often a variation of: *serve as anchor to and steer a process of planning, analysis and coordination to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the local criminal justice system*. As such, the goal is not to implement the myriad programs that criminal justice agencies - the CJCC's member stakeholders themselves - will undertake. Rather, the goal focuses on coordination and overall system effectiveness. Appropriate measures of performance should examine how well the CJCC plans for and coordinates system initiatives to achieve system-wide impacts. Therefore what is being measured is not, for example, the results of a specific initiative to reduce the local jail's pretrial detainee population or to introduce the use of graduated sanctions. Instead, performance measures would examine, for example, the level of collaboration across the criminal justice system, the nature of communication and information sharing within the CJCC, or the extent to which policy and programming decisions reflect system-wide goals, .

To be useful and effective, performance measures should be:
- Quantifiable with targets for measuring progress
- Based on specific benchmarks or indicators
- Attainable or measurable
- Logical and expected to produce the intended outcome
- Easy to understand (e.g., someone outside of the CJCC can understand them)
- Easy to collect and can be monitored regularly
- Part of a regularly monitored and documented practice.

Another important characteristic of good performance measures is that they establish a specific amount of change/progress that is necessary for optimum performance. Unlike program evaluation, where the intent is to test whether or not a program created a change (i.e., establishing a cause and effect relationship), performance measures set targets and then are used to assess whether or not the target is met. For example, a simple performance measure for CJCCs may be that at least 90 percent of members attend all regularly scheduled meetings or that the membership retention rate is 100 percent.

What is Collaboration and Can it be Measured?

One of the keys to success for an effectively functioning CJCC is participant collaboration. Collaboration can be difficult to define in terms of performance measurement, in part because terms like collaboration, cooperation, coordination, and communication are often used interchangeably. Different definitions of the "Cs" abound in scholarly literature. Further complicating matters, the literature refers to different counts of Cs: two Cs, three Cs, and seven Cs. However, agreement exists that collaboration is an animal of a higher order. For purposes of clarity consider this distinction:[2]

Collaboration *is distinct from [other] "C" words. . . Unlike communication, it is not about exchanging information. It is about using information to create something new. Unlike coordination, collaboration seeks divergent insight and spontaneity, not structural harmony. And unlike cooperation, collaboration thrives on differences and requires the sparks of dissent.*

Another understanding of the distinction is that *collaboration* asks that people jointly solve problems to achieve a larger good, while in *cooperation*; people perform together while working on selfish yet common goals.[4]

Researchers have teased out various levels of collaboration to promote understanding of the quality of a particular entity's interaction. Different models have been developed to differentiate various stages of agency collaboration. For example, one model (Hogue, 1993) offers five levels of community linkage: networking, cooperation or alliance, coordination or partnership, coalition and collaboration. Another model (Bailey and Koney, 2000) includes four stages of interaction, culminating in unification: cooperation, coordination, collaboration and coadunation (which means "having grown together"). A seven-stage model recognizes that on the spectrum of agency collaboration, one stage is an absence of collaboration, and just mere coexistence, followed by six levels of increasingly integrated interaction: communication, cooperation, coordination, coalition, collaboration and coadunation (Frey et. al. 2006.[5]

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[3] Leo Denise, "Collaboration vs. C-Three (Cooperation, Coordination, and Communication)", *Innovating* Reprint, Vol. 7, Issue 3**,** The Rensselaerville Institute.

[4] While researchers categorize "collaboration" as a more desirable, or higher form, of interaction than "coordination," one of the "Cs" in the generic term "CJCC" stands for "coordinating." Despite the nomenclature, all such councils should strive to attain the highest degree possible of working together on any initiative, whether one labels it coordination, collaboration, or something else.

[5] Bruce B. Frey, Jill H. Lohmeier, Stephen W. Lee and Nona Tollefson, "Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners," *American Journal of Evaluation*, September 2006 27: 383-392. See Figure 1 in the article. http://onthepoint.smartsimple.biz/files/237865/f95430/Frey__2006_Measuring_Collaboration_Among_Grant_Partners.pdf

Whatever model is employed to study collaboration, it is important to convey findings in a clear format. Because by definition, collaboration exists only when two or more parties interact with one another, patterns of collaboration among multiple entities can be complex to explain narratively, and data on collaboration sometimes may be best presented visually. A "Collaboration Map" offers a way to convey, in one document, relative levels of collaboration among various agencies in a partnership relationship (from no collaboration to high level collaboration).

For their study of the collaboration among partners involved in a Safe Schools, Healthy Students initiative in the Midwest, Frey et. al. created a Collaboration Map that conveyed reported perceptions of interaction among participating agencies through creative use of circles and lines. Their Collaboration Map displays a picture of:

- The 12 participating agencies
- The level of collaboration between each partner (moderate to high)
- The number of partners with whom each agency collaborated
- The mean level of collaboration across all partners by each agency.[6]

Inherent in every model used to assess collaboration is an element of communication, which can also be a difficult concept to measure. Perhaps of particular interest to CJCCs is research into what makes for successful dialogue. By design, the criminal justice system is adversarial in nature, but to be productive, a CJCC needs to keep antagonism out of its proceedings with members and stakeholders. The authors of "Collaborative Policy Making: Governance Through Dialogue" note a starting point stressed in Roger Fisher's well known *Getting to Yes*: that parties must begin negotiations with their interests, not their positions. Summarized below are additional ingredients of collaborative dialogue.

Keys to "Authentic Dialogue":

- Sharing and discussion of all parties' interests and any conflicts at the outset.
- Group development of ground rules, mission and agenda rather than imposition by external authority.
- Facilitator must ensure all participants feel safe in speaking their minds.
- Staff must be trusted by all participants.

Participation from Diverse, Interdependent Stakeholders:

- All stakeholders must be at the table or otherwise engaged to ensure agreements are durable and fully informed.
- The process of participation and problem-solving (e.g., trying to develop measures to assess program performance) leads to understanding of the interdependentness of the stakeholders.

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[6]*Ibid*. See Figure 3 in the article.

Results of Authentic Dialogue:

- Reciprocity- reciprocal relationships – not tradeoffs or *quid pro quos* – become the basis of ongoing work.
- Relationships- new relationships and social capital are formed that would never exist if participants did not work together.
- Learning- understanding facts, what others think, or how scientists view a problem, keeps participants engaged and returning to the table.
- Creativity- techniques like brainstorming and scenario-building where people are encouraged to think past the status quo lead to creative problem solving.

The Long-Lasting System Effects of Collaboration:

- Introduction of shared values/meaning around the criminal justice system, such as reduced recidivism.
- Can foster new heuristics. For example, how to listen to each other, look for common interests rather than differences, or bring people together to address a problem rather than file a lawsuit.[7]

Moving from Conceptualization to Measurement

Indicators to measure collaboration can be designed after first agreeing on a definition of "collaboration" and second, breaking that definition into smaller components, or dimensions. The authors of the article, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration," offer another definition of collaboration:
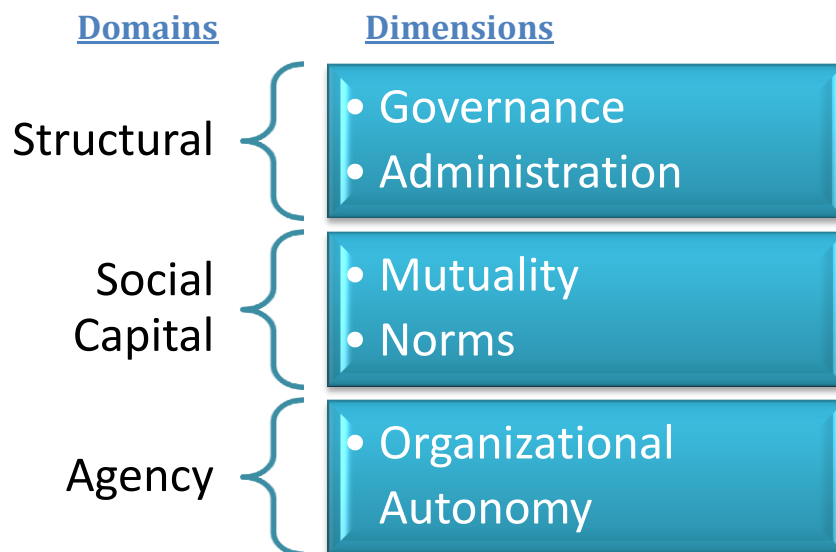
> ***Collaboration*** *is a process in which autonomous or semi-autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interactions.*

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[7] Judith E. Innes and David E. Booher, Chapter 1 in *Deliberative Policy Analysis: Understanding Governance in the Network Society,* Hajer, Maarten and Hendrik Wagenaar eds., Cambridge University Press. 2003.

The definition emphasizes that collaboration is a multidimensional, variable construct composed of five key dimensions that fall under three domains:[8]

Domains   **Dimensions**

Structural
- Governance
- Administration

Social Capital
- Mutuality
- Norms

Agency
- Organizational Autonomy

The work of Thomson, et. al. moved beyond conceptualization of collaboration to measurement of it in a survey designed for directors of organizations that participated in AmeriCorps State/National in 2000 and 2001.[9] Questions probed the extent to which respondents felt their organization or partner organizations engage in certain behaviors or exhibit certain attitudes. The work offers a good model for structuring an instrument to survey perceived levels of collaboration and communication within CJCCs. The following section discusses additional tools to measure work done by CJCCs.

Performance Measures for CJCCs

The good news for CJCCs interested in measuring performance is that they do not necessarily have to reinvent the wheel to get started. Examples of instruments and tools exist that can be adapted to individual needs. This section offers two instruments for measuring performance and collaboration in CJCCs.

Robert Cushman's *Guidelines for Developing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee* is a comprehensive reference intended to aid anyone who wishes to establish or strengthen a criminal justice coordinating committee.[10] The book includes an 11-question, CJCC Self-Evaluation Questionnaire that permits CJCCs to administer a simple self-check of effectiveness. Cushman says of the survey's questions, "Any local jurisdiction that can answer all of these questions in the affirmative has a healthy CJCC and probably is achieving competent system wide planning and coordination." If all of the answers are not affirmative, the book offers suggestions and resources for improvement.

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[8] "Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration," Ann Marie Thomson James L. Perry, Theodore K. Miller, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* Advance Access published December 1, 2007.

[9] See Table 1 for the original 56 questions drawn from the five dimension areas asked of respondents and Table 2 for the 17 indicators used in a final analysis.

[10] Robert Cushman, *Guidelines for Developing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee,* 2002, National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

Name: [ ]

Self-Evaluation Questionnaire[1] for the CJCC

	Characteristic	Rating*
1	Does the CJCC deal with a complete or nearly complete local justice system? (Do all local programs and services for offenders fall within the planning jurisdiction?)	
2	Does the CJCC have sufficient authority to obtain necessary data and to develop plans for the local justice system? (Is the CJCC formally authorized to undertake comprehensive systemwide planning and coordination? Does it have adequate access to agency information, and do agencies cooperate in implementing plans?)	
3	Is planning well integrated into the operations of general government? (Does the CJCC receive significant financial support or other support from the local government?)	
4	Does the CJCC emphasize policy- and program-level planning (as compared with being preoccupied with operational planning)?	
5	Are the CJCC members attending meetings? (Is attendance good? Do the members, rather than alternates, frequently attend?)	
6	Does the CJCC undertake a wide variety of activities rather than allocate grant funds?	
7	Is the CJCC broadly representative (e.g., levels and branches of government; law enforcement, courts; corrections subsystems; other major constituencies)?	
8	Does the CJCC have sufficient, independent staff support?	
9	Is sufficient attention devoted to planning for planning? (e.g., What goals want to be accomplished, how will these goals be accomplished? Have staff been recruited with the skills and experience needed to undertake these tasks? Have the duties, responsibilities, and functions of the CJCC been specified and communicated to participating agencies?)	
10	Do neutrality, credibility, and stability characterize CJCC? (Can agency personnel trust the chair, the committee and the staff to remain impartial and to act in the interest of the system as a whole? Does the staff facilitate good working relationships with agency personnel and other officials of local government?)	
11	Have the CJCC and its planning process been systematically evaluated? Do the evaluation results demonstrate the CJCC's usefulness to local government?	

*Rating Scale:

1	2	3	4	5
no or never				yes or always

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[1] From Cushman, R. C. (2002). Guidelines for developing a criminal justice coordinating committee. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, D.C.

The Collaborative Justice Resource Center, a project of the Center for Effective Public Policy, has a [website](#) containing information about why collaboration is important in the criminal and juvenile justice systems, how it can best be achieved, and various tools and resources, including a survey instrument on collaboration. While Cushman's self-evaluation questionnaire is an 11-question instrument geared specifically for CJCCs, the [CEPP Collaboration Survey instrument](#) is useful for a variety of collaborative criminal justice initiatives. It groups 40 questions into five broad "dimensions of collaboration," or common factors that researchers have found are associated with successful collaboration. CJCCs seeking to create a somewhat more in-depth assessment of performance could combine elements from the Cushman questionnaire with the CEPP Collaboration Survey.[11]

Although subjective, survey research methodologies that obtain key informant assessments such as the Cushman and CEPP models have been demonstrated to have value. The use of survey research has been well established for assessing internal, external and interpersonal communication.[12]

CJCC Performance Measures in Practice

With funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, a network of twelve CJCC leaders and staff from across the country was organized and meets periodically to discuss relevant issues, promising practices, and possible solutions to common concerns. In September 2012, the [CJCC Network](#) convened to discuss performance measure practices in each of these twelve jurisdictions. This section provides examples of work that Network members have done in the area of performance measurement, discusses ways in which performance measures can be implemented, and sheds some light on challenges that may arise along the way.

Among the CJCC Network member agencies, benchmarks or indicators are often assigned to the goals stated in the vision, mission statement and/or strategic plan of the CJCC. This practice is an effective way to connect agency goals with performance. While it does not account for the level of collaboration within a CJCC, it provides a direct and important opportunity to reflect on the work of a CJCC. Many members of the CJCC Network look to these sources to examine their accomplishments and keep abreast of their work. Measuring performance and collaboration beyond those sources is more challenging.

Not all members of the CJCC Network measure performance and, of those that do, they do not measure in exactly the same manner. For those who do measure performance, most measure one or more of these four areas:

1. *Meeting attendance and continuity*
2. *Structure and the contribution of members*
3. *Programs and policies*
4. *Level of satisfaction*

Among the CJCC Network organizations that measure performance, the coordinator of the CJCC generally administers the process. Sometimes, though much less frequently, it is the county or city

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[11] See http://www.collaborativejustice.org/assess/survey.htm and http://www.collaborativejustice.org

[12] See "Exploring Public Sector Communication Performance," Sanjay K. Pandey, James L. Garnett Rutgers University, Campus at Camden, Public Administration Review, Jan. Feb. 2006.

commission or budget office that measures the performance of the CJCC. Information gathered from these measures is used most often internally by the coordinator and stakeholders, and sometimes also by the county or city commission. The measures typically go beyond being an internal check and provide important information that funders can use to gauge the CJCC's efficiency and effectiveness.

Attendance and Continuity - Brad Kaeter, director of the Hennepin County, Minnesota Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee, measures performance by engagement through member meeting attendance; however, he finds that members tend to focus on the number of active projects. He finds that another useful measure is whether the CJCC is functioning within its budget. The criminal justice coordinating councils in Sacramento County, California and Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky both measure performance through attendance. They look to reach a goal of 75 percent attendance.

Structure and Contribution of Members - Since 2010, the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council in Eau Claire County, Wisconsin has devoted a tremendous amount of energy working to facilitate the introduction of evidence based decision making (EBDM) practices into the local criminal justice system. So while the CJCC assesses overall performance, to monitor effort on the EBDM initiative it introduced performance measures looking at factors relating to the process of its implementation. For instance, it checks to see whether CJCC members have delivered two presentations apiece to outside groups about EBDM issues each year and it examines the effectiveness of gathering data related to EBDM implementation and assessment. More generally, the CJCC holds a strategic planning session every year where the council identifies global outcomes and objectives. Afterward, it measures progress yearly on how it is progressing in attaining these goals. It also tracks the number of meetings held, who attends, number of replacements requested, what issues are bought up during the committee meeting where a sub-committee is formed, and what is the outcome or resolution to the issue.

Programs and Policies – The Sacramento County Criminal Justice Cabinet in California also measures performance by focusing on the number of programs, policies, and projects initiated through the Cabinet that affect the criminal justice system. Cabinet members look specifically at parameters based on outcomes and cost savings. Similarly, the Louisville Metro Criminal Justice Commission (Kentucky) counts the number of task groups formed around policy issues as well as the number of grants they submit. The Denver, Colorado Crime Prevention and Control Commission also does not measure the performance of the commission specifically, but instead measures the progress of the programs initiated by the Commission. The Pinellas County, Florida Public Safety Coordinating Council is working on measuring performance by developing cross-system indicators. These measures will not be policy-specific but within broader policy areas (e.g., juvenile justice). The Council will also use its data collaborative to measure across other areas such as mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, diversion, etc. Ultimately, the goal of applying these performance measures is to ensure that various programs or agencies are accountable for their portion of the initiative/s.

Level of Satisfaction - As the former planning manager of the Jefferson County, Colorado Criminal Justice Strategic Planning Committee, Michael Jones utilized the Cushman survey with committee members. He found it useful to administer the questionnaire on a periodic basis to assess the committee's strengths and weaknesses.

Two CJCC Network members, the Louisville Metro Criminal Justice Commission and the Multnomah County, Oregon Local Public Safety Coordinating Council, utilize performance measure surveys. Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon's Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) uses an annual survey designed to determine the level of satisfaction among its members. Responses to the survey's first four questions are reported to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners during budget negotiations, while the 12 other questions are used for LPSCC's staff and Executive Committee to discuss during their annual retreat.

Performance Measure Survey Questions from Multnomah County, Oregon:

> ### *On a scale of 1-4, response options range from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.*
>
> 1. Topics chosen for the meetings' agendas are relevant, timely and the most critical to public safety.
> 2. I am satisfied with the outcomes of Executive Committee meetings.
> 3. I am satisfied with the outcomes or work products of the LPSCC subcommittees and working groups.
> 4. I am satisfied with the performance of LPSCC staff.
> 5. I understand the purpose of Executive Committee meetings.
> 6. I feel like my opinion matters to the Committee.
> 7. The materials distributed at or before meetings adequately prepare me for the discussion and decisions.
> 8. The meetings encourage collaboration and coordination in the public safety system.
> 9. The meetings influence my decisions as a leader.
> 10. The meetings influence the policies and practices of my agency or organization.
> 11. LPSCC subcommittees and working groups examine the issues most critical to our public safety system.
> 12. I understand what the LPSCC subcommittees and working groups do.
> 13. LPSCC staff members are knowledgeable about issues facing the local public safety system.
> 14. LPSCC staff members are knowledgeable about evidence-based practices and relevant public safety research.
> 15. LPSCC staff members are accessible and responsive.
> 16. LPSCC staff members generate high-quality reports and analysis.

While Multnomah County focuses on member satisfaction, Louisville, Kentucky focuses more on members' perceptions of the effectiveness of their CJCC. The Louisville Metro Criminal Justice Commission began using a survey in 2012 to measure member perceptions. It plans to disseminate this survey annually in order to continually gauge member satisfaction.

Performance Measure Survey Questions from Jefferson County, Kentucky:

1. From below, please choose the discipline you best represent
    -   Law enforcement
    -   Defense
    -   Judiciary
    -   Non-Profit/Social Service
    -   Prosecution
    -   Public Safety
    -   Other (please specify)
2. How often do you interact with the Criminal Justice Commission and its staff on projects, committees, requests, etc.?
    -   Weekly
    -   Every 2-3 months
    -   More than once a month
    -   Every 6 months
    -   Monthly
    -   Once a year
    -   Other (please specify)

    (Questions 3-15 have a scale of response options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)

3. The Criminal Justice Commission provides a neutral forum for discussion of relevant issues and emerging topics confronting the local criminal justice system.
4. All critical criminal justice stakeholders are represented on the Criminal Justice Commission Board.
5. The Criminal Justice Commission addresses policy-level criminal justice and public safety issues that are of importance to the citizens of this community.
6. The Criminal Justice Commission assists in the facilitation of systemic planning within the local criminal justice system.
7. The duties, responsibilities and function of the Criminal Justice Commission have been specified and communicated to partner agencies.
8. Criminal Justice Commission staff have the skills and experience necessary to respond to the issues and responsibilities facing the Criminal Justice Commission.
9. The Criminal Justice Commission develops and recommends programs that enhance public safety.
10. Neutrality, credibility and stability characterize the Criminal Justice Commission.
11. The Criminal Justice Commission secures and administers grant funds that enhance public safety.
12. The Criminal Justice Commission provides beneficial research, information and data to Criminal Justice Commission members that assist them with the administration of their departments/agencies.
13. Agency personnel trust the Chair, Executive Committee, and staff of the Criminal Justice Commission to remain impartial and act in the interest of the system as a whole.
14. The Criminal Justice Commission and staff facilitate good working relationships with agency personnel and other local and state officials.
15. The Criminal Justice Commission and staff are responsive to the needs, concerns, and issues expressed by local stakeholders.
16. Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of the Criminal Justice Commission?
17. What topics would you like to see the Criminal Justice Commission address?
18. In your opinion, what can the Criminal Justice Commission do to improve the operation of the local criminal justice system?

Conclusion

With improvement of the criminal justice system a primary goal of most CJCCs, CJCC leaders want and need to assess project and system-wide outcomes. Therefore, information on how effectively a CJCC's members and staff are communicating and collaborating can very likely assist in identifying practices that will enable it to most effectively encourage successful justice system initiatives. CJCCs should pursue both sets of performance measures: external system measures and internal organizational effectiveness measures. With an understanding of what characteristics to gauge, measures of internal performance are easy to develop and administer, and should be a part of every CJCC's tool kit.

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