

# STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENTS

## A. IDENTIFYING RESULTS

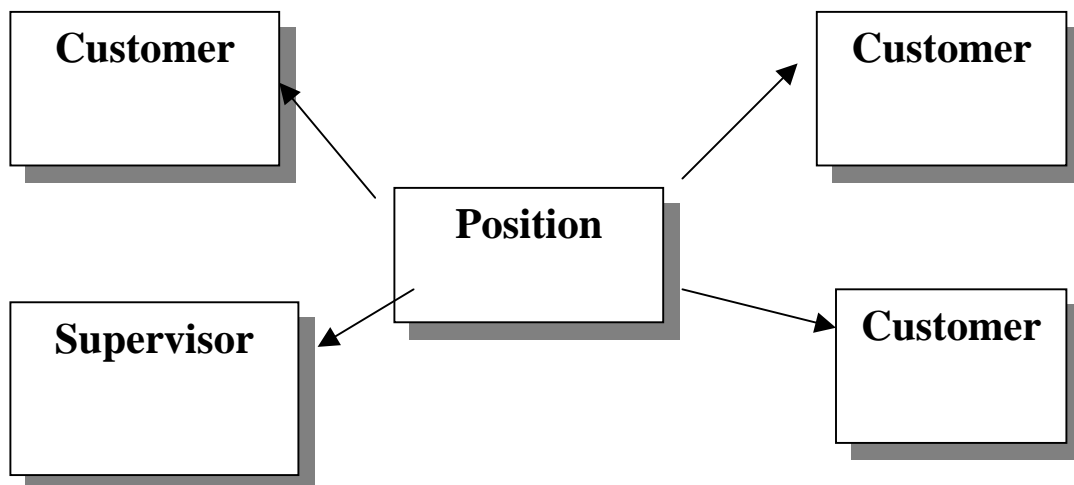
There are two options when deciding *what* to measure in a job: behavior or results. For most jobs, the Core Competencies should suffice as measures of behavior. Measuring *results*, once the standards are developed, is a much more objective process. Although some things can only be measured behaviorally, try to measure as much as possible by results. In the time-consuming process of performance planning, it takes less time to develop performance standards based on results.

**Value-added results** are the contributions the team/individual makes to the organization that result from their activities and add value to the organization. They are the valuable products they leave behind after they go home at night.

One way to identify the results of a position is by examining the PDQ, listing the position's responsibilities, and asking what product each activity generates. This method is perfectly valid, but can take a great deal of time. Often, it generates a long list of results which must then be "filtered" to define what to measure.

Another method involves drawing a "Customer Diagram" for the position. Identifying the position's customers and what is provided to each is a quicker way to arrive at the "short list" of results for a position. *This exercise is best performed by the person in the position, who then meets with the supervisor for input:*

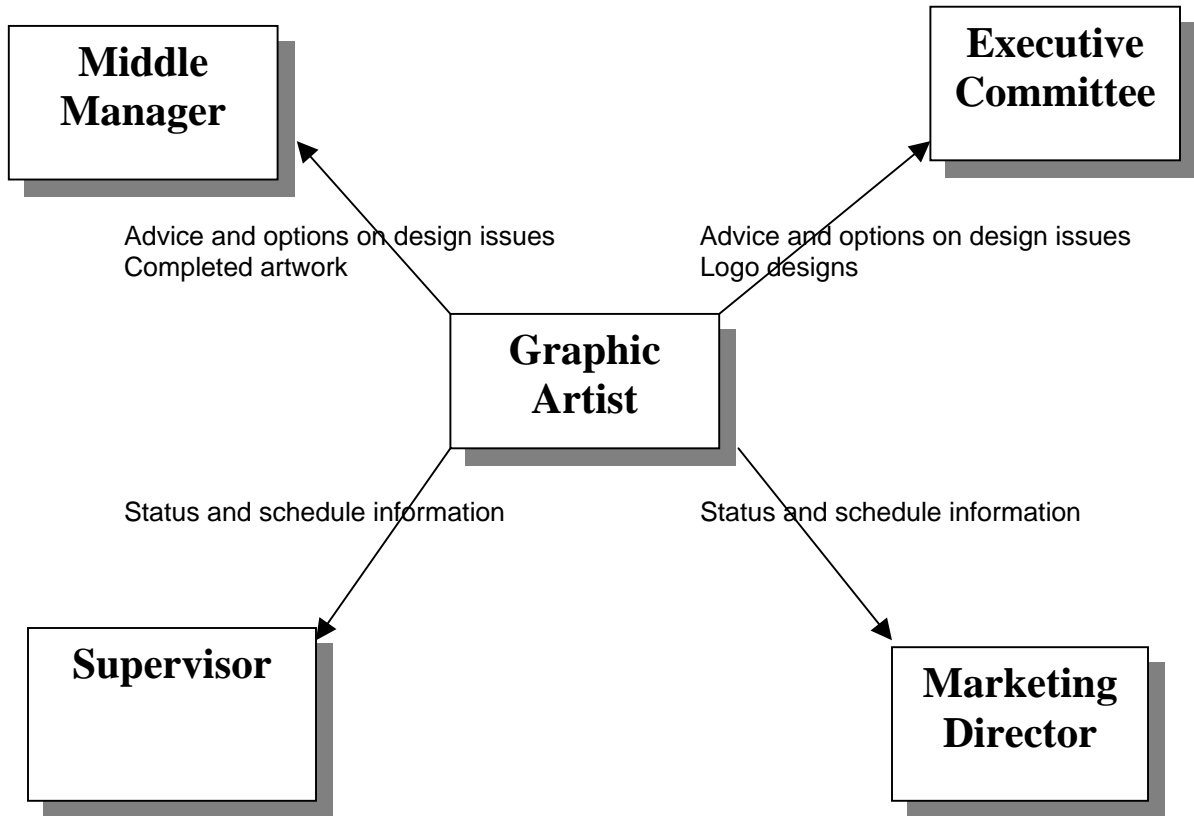
**EXERCISE** Using the blank form on Page 3, draw a diagram with the job holder in the center. Add boxes for each type of customer the person works with. A customer is anyone to whom the person provides products or services, which *the customer needs to do their job*. A customer can be inside or outside the work unit, agency, or state government.



A position's supervisor is always one of its customers. In addition, a supervisor's employees are always customers, usually grouped in one box.

Next, identify the products and services each customer receives from the position. Write these results on the arrows leading to each customer.

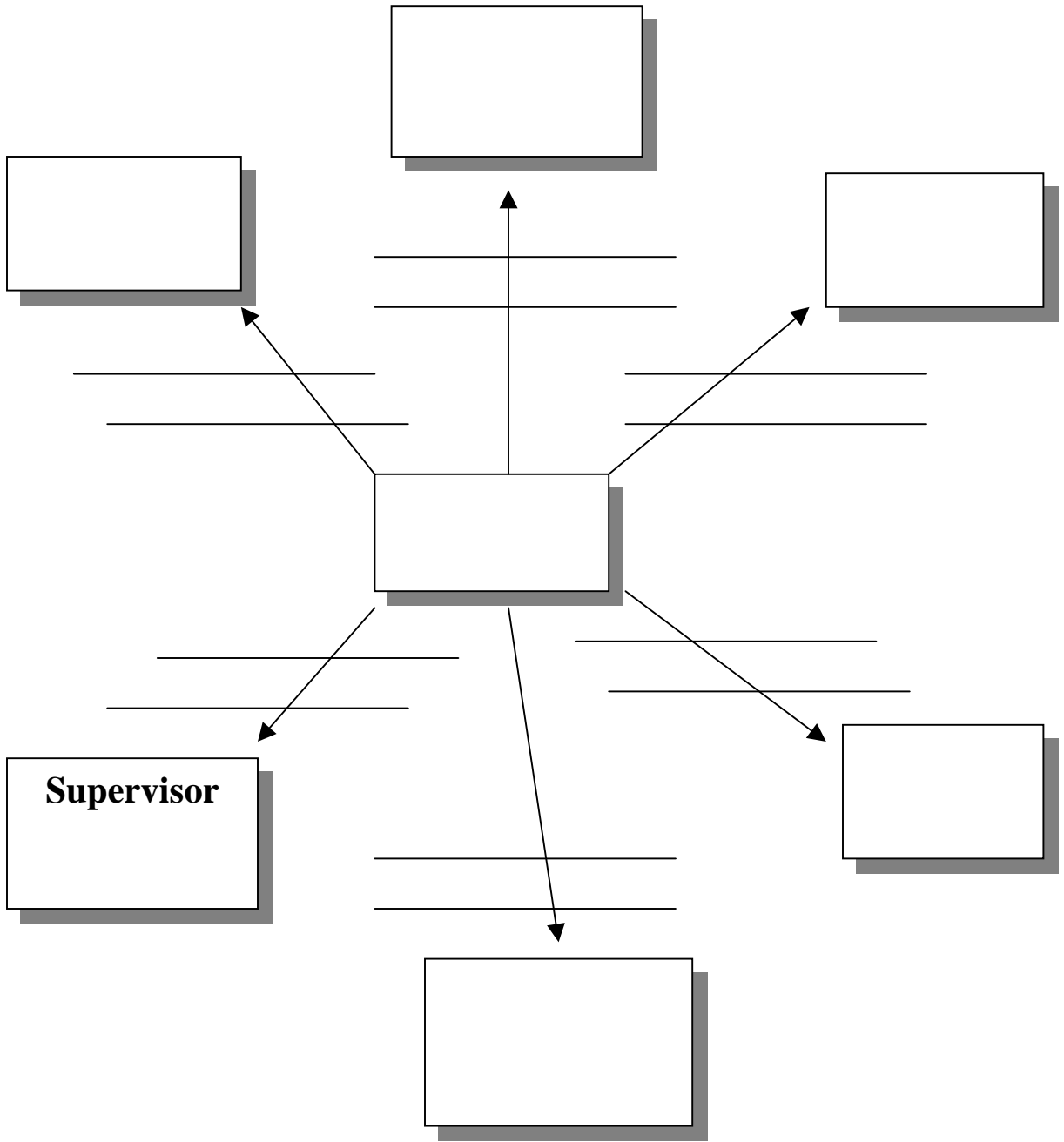
This sample diagram, for a graphic artist, is from an article by Jack Zigon:



This exercise gives a short list of results to measure for this position:

- Advice and options on design issues
- Completed artwork
- Status and schedule information
- Logo designs

The following page is a blank customer diagram. Use this to identify the customers for your position, and the products and services each customer needs from you. Then, list the products and services in the "Results" column of the table on Page 4.



**Customer Diagram**



Read your list of results. For each result listed, ask yourself:

- Is this result totally within my control, or does it depend on something from an outside source?
- Is this result part of the output of my work unit, or something unique to my position?

If one or more of these items has a basis that is out of your control, consider removing it from your list of results. It will not make a good IPO. Some examples of no-control results:

- Serve X number of walk-in customers for fishing licenses.
- Disburse funds from federal grants
- Process X number of retirements each fiscal year

If one or more of these items is tied to the total output of your work unit, your portion of it may still be measurable. Set it aside for now, and refer to the “Team Measurement” section to see if that is a better way to measure it. Some examples of work unit or team results:

- Produce X number of healthy catchable trout annually.
- Respond to user reports of problems with computer hardware and software.
- Process X number of requests for well records.
- Any result for which you are not *solely* responsible

## **B. DEFINING MEASURES**

Measures are the factors you use to evaluate how well a result has been done. There are two kinds of measures: numeric and descriptive. *Not everything can be measured with numbers.* Instead, think about *verifiability*. You want measures that can be used to verify whether a standard was met, exceeded, or not met.

Numeric measures are easily verified, so they meet the goal of verifiability. When there is no way to measure with numbers, *describe* the performance in a way that can be verified. Here is an example, from the “Graphic Artist.”

| <b>Result</b> | <b>General Measure</b> | <b>Specific Measure</b>  | <b>Standard</b> |
|---------------|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Logo designs  | Quality                | <p><b>Customer</b> wants the right image, an easily recognizable design that matches the personality of the product.</p> <p><b>Supervisor</b> wants a logo that is easily reproduced, with creative use of typeface.</p> |                 |

If you already know what “unit of measure” to track, write it down in the “Specific Measure” column. To identify the measures for more complicated results, try these steps:

1. Most results can be evaluated from the standpoint of either quantity, quality, cost, or timeliness (or a combination). Ask yourself which of these factors your customer is concerned with. Write this in the “General Measure” column next to the result.
2. Consider what units to track for a specific measure. For example:
  - **Quantity** can be tracked by a numeric measure. The specific measure would be something like “# of licenses sold” or “# of payroll actions”
  - **Quality** may need to be tracked by a *descriptive* measure. Identify who would judge the quality of the work, and what factors the judge would look at when evaluating the results. Ask yourself, “*For each factor the judge will look at, what would this person see that means I have done a good job?*” Describe what the person would see in a way that can be verified.
  - **Cost** can usually be tracked by a numeric measure; for example: “plus or minus 5% of budget.”
  - **Timeliness** may be tracked by a unit of time, for example: “ X days ahead of schedule.”
3. Look at agency goals and standards, to see if any of those sources yields a measurement for your contribution.
4. Another acceptable way to create measures is to “borrow and modify.” If another work unit has created measures that could be adapted to your job, use them!
5. Remember, the goal here is to define a measure that is *verifiable*. If the measure can be verified by a third party, the IPO will be objective, attainable, and trackable over time.

Add the specific measure to your worksheet in the column labeled “Specific Measure.”

### C. SETTING STANDARDS

After defining a specific measure for each result, the next step is to set a performance standard.

1. Begin by defining what result would *meet* expectations. Any numeric measure should be expressed as a *range*, not a specific number. Defining a performance range automatically gives a definition of “exceeds.” If, for example, meeting expectations for budget is expressed as plus or minus 5% of the agreed-upon budget, achieving “minus 10%” would be interpreted as exceeding expectations.
2. For a descriptive measure, the standard should also include a definition of “exceeds.” The supervisor should ask, “What would I see happening that would be considered ‘exceeding’ expectations?” Is this verifiable?

Here is an example from the Graphic Artist:

| Result       | General Measure | Specific Measure   | Standard  |
|--------------|-----------------|--|---|
| Logo designs | Quality         | <p><b>Customer</b> wants the right image, an easily recognizable design that matches the personality of the product.</p> <p><b>Supervisor</b> wants a logo that is easily reproduced, with creative use of typeface.</p> | <p><b>Customer</b> is satisfied that the image conveyed is the one desired; the message is clear, the logo is easily recognizable<br/> <b>Exceeds:</b> The customer says she is <i>excited</i> about using the logo.<br/> <b>Supervisor</b> is satisfied that logo reproduces well in various sizes, conveys the function of the product, uses type in a unique manner, has high-quality art.<br/> <b>Exceeds:</b> Design wins an award; general public recognizes the logo without accompanying words.</p> |

Add the performance standards to the table. Remember to show a definition of “exceeds” in any descriptive measure.

Using the table of results, measures, and standards, an employee and supervisor should be able to craft an IPO statement that will be clear and achievable. As a final quality check, review the list of results and answer the following questions:

**Does the list of results:**

- Describe *end products*, not activities?
- Account for 80% or more of your job's responsibilities?
- Specify the *critical* results your customers need to do their jobs?

**Does each performance standard:**

- *Clearly state* what is expected, using the language of the job?
- Allow *verification* that the performance standard has been met? Can it be *seen*, or could several knowledgeable persons agree that the performance standard has been met?
- Have a *judge, list of factors, and what a good job looks like* for each factor, when the measures are descriptive?
- Appear *practical* to track and monitor? Is it based on measurable data, observation, or verifiable information?
- Use a *range* when the measure is numeric?
- Leave room to exceed the standard, or require perfection *only* when no errors can be tolerated? Is the definition of "exceeds" challenging?
- Link to work unit, division, and department goals and mission?