

**Public Value: Of, By, and For the People**  
**An Analytic Note for a Webinar Presented on June 28, 2017**

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The public value framework has been used by public executives around the world for two decades as a guide to managerial strategy and action. It begins with the simplest idea: that public managers should pursue public goals that are valuable, legitimate, and doable. At a time citizens feel alienated from government and lack faith in its ability to help them accomplish individual and collective goals, it is particularly important not only to remember the foundational concepts of the public value framework, but also to be aware of, and to see behind those concepts exactly where individual citizens, acting in different roles with respect to government action, fit in, and might be more effectively engaged. By keeping citizens and their perspectives in the foreground of strategic thought, public managers can work to strengthen connections between government and the individuals who constitute, instruct, and benefit from it.

***Strategy in a Dynamic and Uncertain World***

The core concepts of public value creation were developed at a time when many ideas about effective management were moving from the private to the public sector. These concepts tended to emphasize the role of individuals as the appropriate arbiters of the value produced by government – most particularly through the development of an emphasis on “customer-oriented” government. At the same time, there was an increased emphasis on “government performance” and the ability to demonstrate “social impact” through the use of measures that could capture the degree to which the government was able to achieve “desired social outcomes.” These different concepts were often conflated by assuming that the “desired social outcome” was defined by the individual “customers of government”. Hence, a high performing government would be one that would satisfy customers.

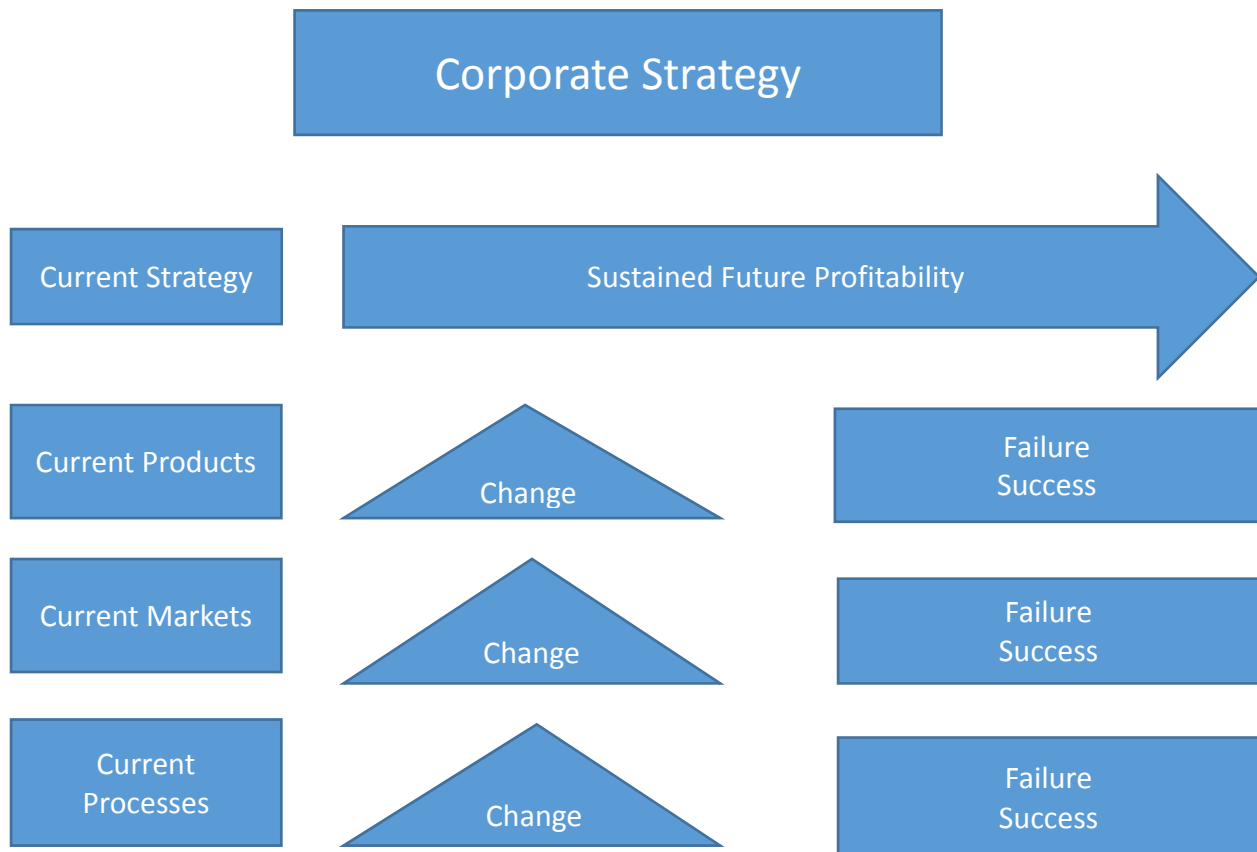
That idea had no small amount of ideological resonance, but it left open the question of exactly who the customers of government were, and what they wanted. Were they the beneficiaries of government programs who evaluated the programs in terms of whether they made them happy? Or were they the taxpayers who footed the bill for the benefits? Or were they the individuals on whom duties and obligations were imposed by government to create a good and just community for all? Or were they the citizens who participated in the processes of electing and advising government officials about how they ought to use the collectively owned assets of government (both money and legal authority) to improve the quality of individual and collective life? Or were they the officials that citizens elected to public office?

While the concepts of customer satisfaction, and performance measurement made headway in government, one key concept in private-sector management seemed to lag behind: the idea of “corporate strategy.” Key to the idea of corporate strategy was a declaration by the top management of an organization about how assets held by the enterprise would be

deployed in producing products and providing services to specific consumer markets. The leaders of commercial enterprises had to develop and talk about “strategy” in these terms for straightforward reasons: both investors and employees needed to know what top management was planning to do, and in particular, whether they were going to keep doing what they had done in the past, or whether they were going to change.

What made this challenging (for both managers and investors!) was the fact that the leaders of commercial enterprises faced a very dynamic and uncertain environment. The *dynamic* feature of their environment required a degree of flexibility and agility. The *uncertainty* in their environment meant they had to take (calculated!) risks, and sometimes suffered losses even when they made good decisions. The combination of dynamism and uncertainty meant that current plans would almost certainly have to change as the organization confronted new and often unanticipated realities.

One simple way to describe a corporate strategic plan is to imagine it as a specific set of changes - or “deltas” – in three specific aspects of the corporation’s activities: 1) in the markets in which it planned to compete; 2) in the products and services it planned to offer; and 3) in the production processes it planned to use to produce the (old or new) products and services. Some of the deltas required phasing out or eliminating organizational activities that were eating up resources and failing to create value. Other deltas required innovations and new investments, made in the hopes of helping the organization sustain or increase its profitability in the future.



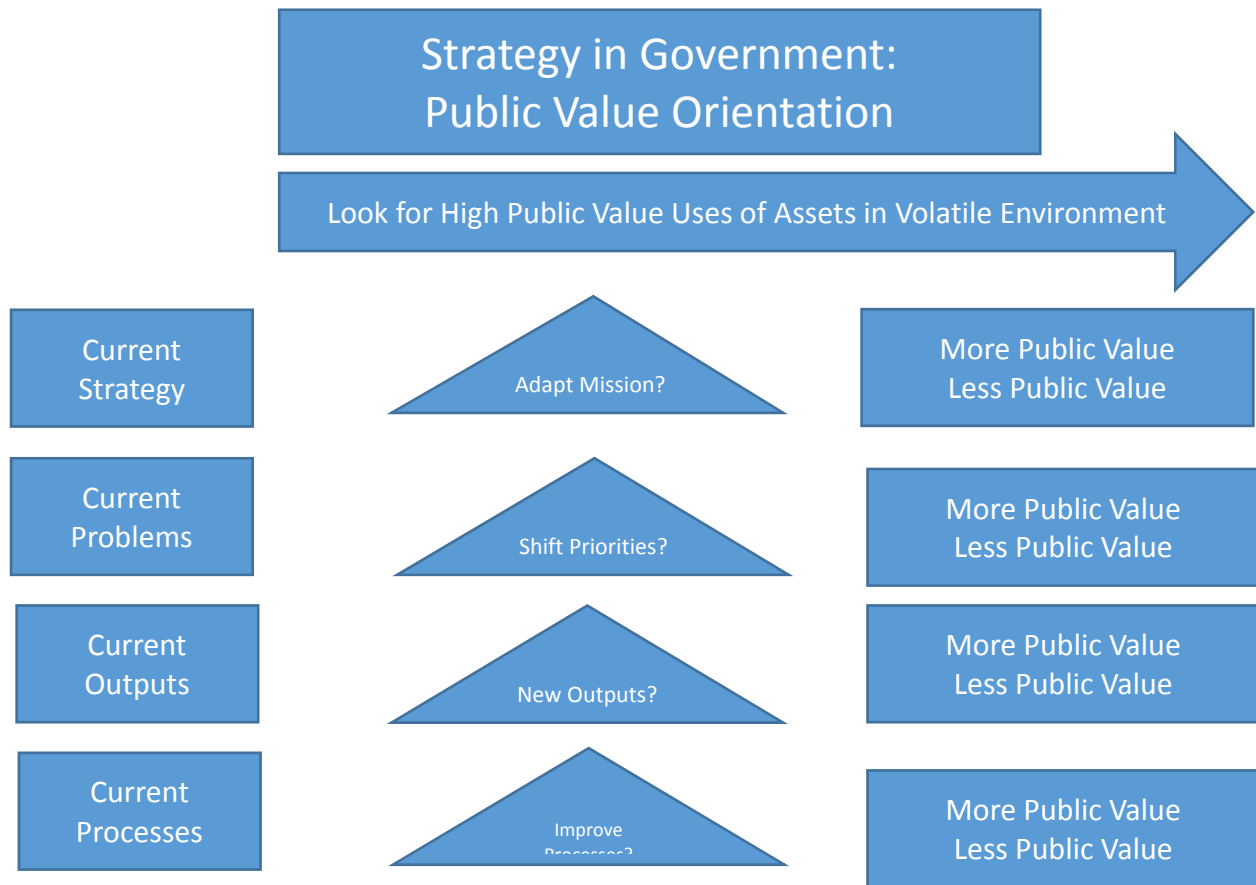
## ***Strategy in Public Management***

In the public sector, strategy is generally tied to a mission or public purpose that has been established for a given government agency. These missions are often seen as a fixed point providing constant guidance to government managers, and enabling effective political oversight of their activities and performance. Unfortunately, the accountability and control that is supposed to be provided by a fixed mission is often undermined by the fact that the missions of government organizations are framed at very high levels of abstraction; further, they usually describe conditions to be produced sometime in the more or less distant future. The gap between aspirations and performance, and between conditions and measureable results that can be directly observed in the short run versus those results that can only be observed in the distant future leaves managers with a great deal of discretion to decide exactly how to deploy assets today for both current and future benefit. In this sense, public managers are implicitly granted a great deal of strategic discretion in what they decide to do. They can shift priorities among existing activities, as well as note and respond to emergent conditions within their domain of responsibility. They can even consider changing what they and their authorizers had previously considered the mission of the organization on grounds that the old mission was less valuable than some alternative uses of the assets and capabilities the organization possessed.

Despite the fact that public managers seem to have significant discretion in changing the outputs, production processes, and even the strategic direction of their organizations (and therefore an important opportunity to use their strategic imagination to make the most of the discretion they have in the pursuit of value creating strategies), public managers often decide that the best way of achieving their mission is simply to continue doing what they have done in the past. In their minds, the challenge of achieving the mission often becomes fused with the familiar day-to-day of current operations. They cannot see the space that lies between the space the many alternative ways that could be used to frame and pursue their mission, and their current activities. From that perspective, the only way to improve mission performance is to execute current policies and procedures with greater reliability and efficiency, or increase the scale of the enterprise so it could do more of what it is now doing. The mission statement stops being a challenge to creative, value creating thought, and becomes instead a way of protecting the status quo in a world that is changing around them. This kind of blind adherence to bureaucratic ideals of consistency and predictability remains at odds with the dynamic and unpredictable world in which public executives operate. Public value, since its inception, has been an idea designed to give public managers license to step outside of the box, evaluate their (volatile) environments, and form a strategy to produce more value for the public with the assets they control.

To many, the idea that public managers should have and exercise discretion with respect to the overall strategy of the organization's they lead poses a threat to democracy, since the control over the definition of ends, and the authorization of means should be retained by elected officials, not managers. The "chief executives" of government, of course, are chosen by popular election, and then appoint officials to positions in the executive branch at the head (and sometimes well into the ranks) of public agencies. These appointed officials define the strategies and ensure the performance of public organizations.

Importantly, however, the success of such officials depends critically on how effective they can be in creating political support for the strategies they would like to pursue. This usually requires them to learn to deal effectively with other actors in the political system such as legislators, interest groups, and the media, and sometimes (when important legal rights are at stake) with courts. It also depends critically on how effective they can be in engaging their senior civil servants and other employees in carrying out the strategy they have in mind. Given these constraints, it is hard for either career bureaucrats, or even politically elected and appointed public executives to get too far away from the demands of democratic accountability.



*Public Value*

*Public value* begins as an abstract philosophical idea that the job of the public executive is to use public assets to improve the quality of life at individual and collective levels. Each public manager holds a piece of the responsibility for that broad, abstract goal. But management is a purposeful enterprise, performed in concrete circumstances; it requires a target. So public managers take the mission as a starting point, then break it down into specific goals and objectives (ends) to be pursued through particular policies, programs, and procedures (selected means to the ends). If there is a solid logic that connects high level values and goals to

lower level objectives, and the operational processes are well designed to achieve the many particular objectives, then managers can be fairly confident a focus on the concrete activities will, in fact, make some progress or contribution toward the more broadly defined mission.

Just as a business strategy begins with a market of individuals with wants, needs and money to spend, an organizational mission starts with a particular idea about a social condition that requires some kind of public action. The social conditions of concern could include physical environments (polluted rivers, unsafe buildings), economic conditions (unemployment, low wages), social relations (racial discrimination, oppression and abuse of one social group by another), or political rights (abuse by government, insufficient opportunities to participate in governance and public policy making). These conditions could be seen as a kind of market of social problems viewed by citizens as more or less in need of solutions.

But just as market conditions can change around a commercial enterprise, so social conditions (and/or our collective desire to do something about them) can change around an existing government agency. Therefore, it might be advisable for elected, appointed and career officials leading executive branch agencies to view both their mission, and the particular methods they have embraced in pursuit of that mission as alterable – not fixed; as somewhat open-ended rather than perfectly defined. Three reasons push towards treating mission as changeable. First, as noted, social conditions and political aspirations may have changed. Second, the actions of a given public agency have effects (positive and negative) outside of the organizational mission, Third, individual agencies often hold just a piece of the solution to important public problems, and may need to coordinate with other entities and respond to other entities’ needs in order to make improvements. Holding the mission open for inspection and investigation rather than using it as a shield against change allows public managers to explore their capacity to achieve publicly valuable results.

When considering how best to use the assets of a government agency, it is important to remember that we measure the success of government action in terms of its effects on individuals as well as how those effects accumulate into collective results. It is also essential to remember that there are two different and equally important normative, philosophical bases for evaluation. Because the public sector is unique in its use of the authority of the state (including authority to raise revenues for public purposes), the question is not merely whether actions produce *good* effects, but also whether they produce *just* effects; not only whether the government acts efficiently and effectively, but also whether it acts fairly.

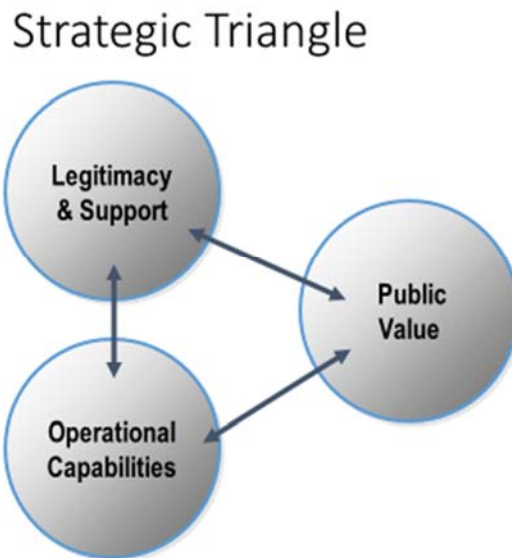
These distinct elements of the general concept of public value are set out in the public value matrix presented below.

	Individual level	Collective level
The Good (utilitarian)	client satisfaction/individual welfare	achievement of social outcomes
The Just (deontological)	fair treatment of individuals in delivering benefits and imposing duties	establishing a just social order

Public managers seeking to maximize public value creation neglect any one quadrant of this matrix at their peril!

## *The Strategic Triangle*

The *strategic triangle* is a device designed to help public managers move from the abstract world that draws attention to the importance and the opportunity to think about creating value as well as pursuing historically defined missions and into the concrete environment in which they operate. This is where we get down to brass tacks. To bring abstract possibilities for value creation into concrete circumstances, public managers need an analytic framework that can focus their attention on the realities they face. In doing so, it is often useful to start with an idea of the public value the manager wants to create, and how that might be accomplished. But the strategic triangle quickly focuses the attention of managers on two other key parts of their practical, strategic calculation. Is there *legitimacy and support* for the public manager's particular conception of public value? Does the manager have the *operational capacity* to get the job done?



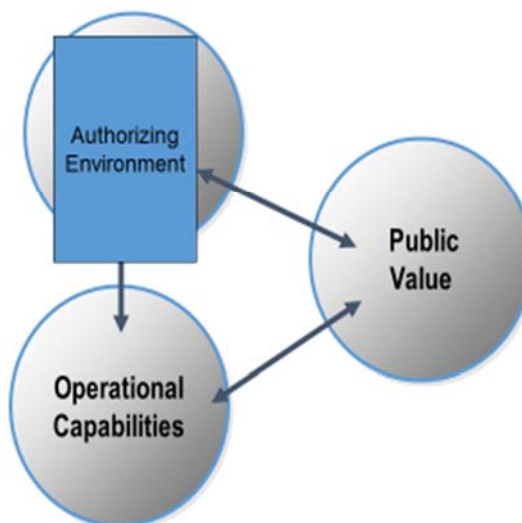
Just as the strategic calculation of a private sector manager begins with a review of the concrete market conditions he or she faces, the strategic calculation of the public managers begins with a review of the social conditions which could be improved by government operations. We will call this the agency's *task environment*. Generally speaking, it consists of: 1) individuals with particular wants, needs, and entitlements; and 2) aggregate social conditions that are experienced and valued by individuals for themselves and for others -- physical environments, economic conditions, social relationships, political rights. It is in changing these valued social conditions through the use of government assets that public value is created.

## Strategic Triangle



Whatever the particular value proposition, a public manager's ability to achieve it depends, in the first instance, on the legitimacy and support you can muster in your *political authorizing environment*. The authorizing environment includes all the people in a position to call your organization to account, to evaluate its performance and value, and to supply (or withhold) the resources you need to get the job done.

## Strategic Triangle



This begins, of course, with individual citizens. Individual citizens show up in the authorizing environment in two kinds of roles: voters and taxpayers who authorize and pay for government action and clients who receive benefits and are reminded of their public duties.

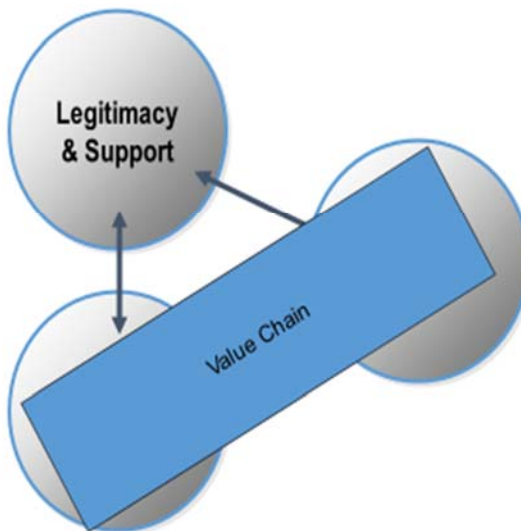
The authorizing environment also includes associations of individuals who have voluntarily banded together to amplify their individual voices to advance their particular material interests, protect their cultural identities, or advocate policies that they believe are consistent with producing a good and just society.

It includes media outlets of various kinds and elected officials in both the executive and legislative branches of government. It may also include courts, if individual citizens or groups of citizens can make a case that government actions have violated their constitutional rights.

And it includes both governmental and non-governmental watchdog agencies, and the people who work in government agencies. Thus, rather than provide a simple red/yellow/green light to guide planning and action, the authorizing environment presents a dazzling set of lights, and how much support you have depends to some degree on where you are looking. There may be unexpected support or unexpected opposition lying in wait to propel or stop a particular proposal.

The second basic test the strategic triangle poses to your public value proposition is whether you possess the *operational capacity* to deploy the money and authority of the state along a *value chain* to create the desired outcomes.

## Strategic Triangle

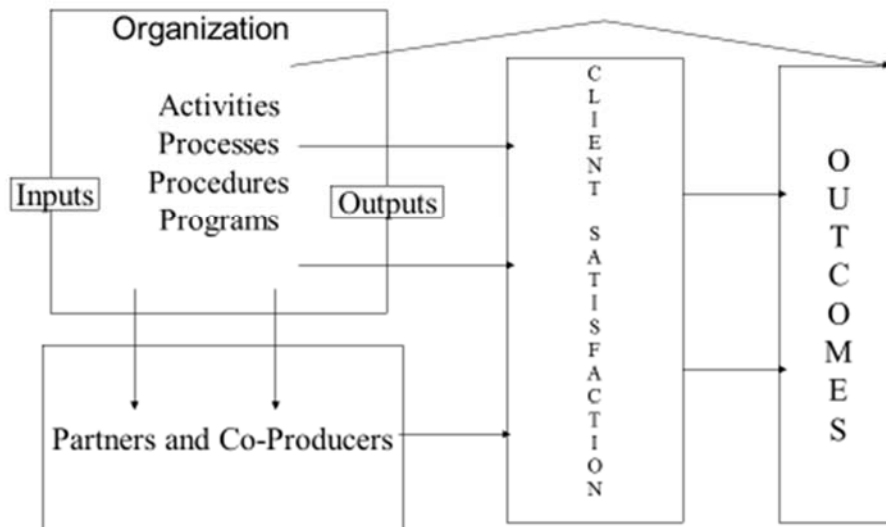


Success depends on the strength and reliability of the processes you rely on to deploy those assets: the flow from inputs; to policies, programs, and procedures; to outputs and transactions with individual clients; and ultimately to the achievement of social outcomes.





## The “Value Chain”



As you look at this rudimentary sketch of the value chain, several complications are worth keeping in mind. First, the clients who are the focus of direct transactions with government agencies are engaged in two quite different kinds of transactions: some are receiving benefits and services (with the cost being covered in large part by taxpayers); others are having obligations imposed on them. This reminds us that the satisfaction of clients is not the only, or perhaps even the most important, feature of the transaction.

Second, public managers almost always find that their capacity is inadequate to the task of achieving their mission. This is at least partly because we rarely provide government agencies with enough money and authority to directly produce the desired results, but it is also because private individuals and actors are often in a better position to achieve a desired result than a government agency. This means public agencies must mobilize co-producers. Co-producers may be individual clients receiving benefits (e.g., individuals getting public assistance to quit substance abuse); voluntary co-producers (e.g., parents of schoolchildren helping with homework, citizens sorting the recyclable materials from their household trash); contractors from the private and nonprofit sectors; or collective clients (e.g. companies complying with environmental regulations).

### *Summary: A Simple and Complex Idea*

The strategic triangle simply says that in order to be an effective producer of public value, public managers have to have some idea about the value you want to create, a reasonable belief that there is legitimacy and support available for that notion of value, and some operational capacity to get the job done. But there are two aspects of this simple idea that make it particularly challenging.

The first is that public managers must do the hard work of empirically investigating and carefully reflecting on the various complex issues that lie beneath the simple categories of public value, legitimacy and support, and operational capacity. You will encounter jungles and marshes and bogs in the effort to comprehensively map and understand this terrain.

The even harder and more important work is to make sure that the strategy you finally come to is coherent in the sense that it has a satisfactory answer to the question posed by each point on the strategic triangle. Is it value-creating? Does it have sufficient legitimacy and support? Can it work as a practical matter?

A public manager may start off with a clear idea of where things stand at all three points, but find that they are far apart. He or she might then have to find a way to engage the authorizing environment to move it towards public value. He or she might need to develop operational capacity by making strategic investments and innovations to bring operational capacity in line with the public value they are trying to produce. It's also possible that the necessary legitimacy and support and/or operational capacity for your public value proposition are not available, no matter how hard you work, in which case you might have to adjust your idea about what constitutes public value to something that's more in reach. That might be a painful experience, but you will at least gain insight into what the aspirations of the people are and where the limits of current knowledge about how to use the capacity of government to produce particular kinds of value lie.

### ***Individuals in the Strategic Triangle***

It's axiomatic that democratic governments exist to satisfy the wants, needs, and rights of citizens, just as businesses exist to satisfy customers. But the idea of a citizen is a lot more complicated than the idea of a customer. Customers purchase goods and services with their own money for their own use. They may or may not be rational choices, but they pretty much get what they pay for. Citizens use their political rights to authorize the government to use the assets of the state to take particular actions that affect them in various ways. But they don't pay directly for the services or social outcomes they want, and they often don't get what they want as individuals at all. And they are often uncertain about exactly where their interests lie.

The uncertainty is not due to simple intellectual confusion and uncertainty about what individuals would like; it is the result of a structural problem -- when government acts, individual citizens can be affected in many different ways *because they stand in several different relationships to government, and their response to government action may depend critically on how they understand their particular relationship to government at that particular time.*

There are at least six different roles individuals can occupy in the process of defining, working to produce, and evaluating governmental activities.

#### *Individual Roles*

*As authorizers*, citizens are the rightful arbiters of the value produced by government. They empower and direct the government to act in their name by voting, contacting their

representatives, forming political associations, protesting government action, or taking complaints to the courts if the government tramples their rights.

As *taxpayers*, citizens finance all kinds of government action. We taxpayers sometimes feel like customers of a perverse kind of business. We hand over our money hoping for one thing and get something else entirely. We may have to pay more for the same service than the person standing next to us. But while the government must be accountable and transparent in its use of taxpayer money, taxpayers resemble customers insofar as they are handing over money. Unlike customers, taxpayers are compelled to pay, and can't choose whether or not to spend money on particular activities or outcomes. Those choices are made by their representatives, who may or may not accurately represent their personal desires or interests.

Citizens who work as *public sector employees* carry out the day-to-day tasks of government. Those who enjoy strong workplace morale, clear lines of accountability, and are motivated by public purposes can act as "force multipliers" within government. Employees stuck in inadequate, unjust, or burdensome accountability structures, on the other hand, may act in ways that slow or even counteract the aims of their respective agencies.

As *beneficiaries* of government, citizens receive services ranging from education and job placement assistance to infrastructure development and maintenance, from public policing to cultural opportunities. These benefits usually cost them nothing beyond what they have contributed as taxpayers, and often accrue simply as changes in their environment, whether physical or economic/social/political. Other government benefits are delivered directly to individuals who have needs or rights that the citizenry as a whole has decided to provide in the interest of creating a good and just society in which they would like to live.

As government *obligatees*, citizens have a variety of duties, obligations, and restrictions imposed on them by government policy. The entire business of lawmaking is a process of establishing our obligations towards one another. We cannot attack or steal from others. We have to wear seat belts, ensure our children go to school, apply for building permits, and so on. Laws and regulations designed to protect individuals take a bite out of our individual freedom just as taxation takes a bite out of our wallets.

Finally, as *co-producers*, citizens respond to the assistance they get and the duties that are imposed on them as clients of government in ways that advance or undermine value creation. They also play key voluntary roles alongside government agencies, helping them achieve their goals. Ideally, citizen co-producers allow government to leverage the impact of public spending and reduce the cost and burden of enforcement by tapping into the public spirit that is available when the ends of government seem good or just.

Citizens do not occupy only one of these roles at any given time: they occupy multiple roles simultaneously. That is what it means to be a government of, by, and for the people. As Hannah Arendt observed, being a citizen in a democratic society doesn't make one free of all constraints. That would leave us all open to victimization not only by the state but also by our fellow citizens. Being a citizen in a democratic society gives one the most important kind of freedom: namely, to participate in the "design of the architecture of our own constraint", including the commitments we make to protect the economic welfare, the social dignity and autonomy, and the political rights of each and all of us.

### *Citizenship*

To illustrate these ideas, let's take a hypothetical "Jill Citizen" who is an individual with a particular set of relationships to the American health care system. This is an enormously complex system consisting of commercial enterprises, nonprofit enterprises, and government agencies; financed by tax dollars, consumer dollars, and investment dollars; and evaluated partly by people getting care, but also by people authorizing this system to have a particular character.

Perhaps the most natural initial perspective to take is that of Jill as the client *beneficiary* who might get sick and will need the benefit of health care. She would like reassurance that she will get some help when she needs it.

Of course, being an *obligatee* as well, Jill is expected to take on some of the responsibility for her health herself. She may embrace this responsibility or chafe somewhat against social norms of healthy behavior and statutory regulations that require her to act in ways that protect her health.

The degree to which she lives up to those obligations affects her own health, but also affects those who share the same insurer and those who depend on her good health—in part because she is also a *co-producer* of the health of her loved ones, for whom she may have to care if their health fails. In all these roles, she probably would appreciate help of some kind.

But she is also the *taxpayer* financing the care of other people, even when she does not need help herself.

And she is an *authorizer* of the system, using her vote and perhaps other means to signal to the government what role she'd like it to play in guaranteeing adequate health care.

The most important role of individuals in democratic societies is not ponying up the resources to deal with particular problems, and not benefitting from fellow citizens' largesse or complying with the obligations they impose. It is authorizing the government to take the actions that produce results in each of these roles. The idea of individuals as authorizers includes all the efforts individuals with ideas about what constitutes a good and just society make to express those ideas to the rest of us for consideration and deliberation so that we, as individuals, can decide whether to join our voices to theirs. Being ready and able to put forward our ideas in a conscientious way is what could be described as citizenship, and it is the citizens together who are the ultimate, appropriate arbiters of public value.

If Jill wants to think like a citizen, she has to try to integrate her various perspectives, imagining what kind of health care system she would choose to have if she didn't know which role she would find herself in at any given moment, or whether she would need more help than average over the course of her life or end up paying more into the system (in dollars and personal effort) than she would get back in help and care. Citizens are aware that they and those they care about might end up in a wide variety of positions vis-à-vis government as a matter of luck.

### ***Implications for Public Managers***

Thus, the critical question for democracies and those who carry out their work is how to help people understand their interdependence and think like citizens rather than individuals with particular interests and preferences at particular moments in time. The relationship of

democratic government to its citizens seems broken, and politics and government as we now organize and think about them seem unable to restore the relationship.

Instead of encouraging individuals to think like citizens who have both rights and responsibilities as members of a democratic society, electoral politics tend to focus on each person's view of their own particular rights, and the resentments and grievances they have accumulated from the past rather than the opportunities in the future.

We have tried to fix this relationship by developing a "customer-oriented" government, and it is certainly right that a democratic government needs to pay close attention to its citizens, but the idea that government needs to serve individual citizens as customers fundamentally misunderstands the role of individual citizens in democratic society. A democratic government relates to its individual citizens through three quite distinct processes: the political processes through which citizens are consulted about the values they would like to see advanced through democratic governance; the ways they experience the benefits and burdens that fall on them as a consequence of public policy decisions; and the contributions they voluntarily make to achieve public purposes.

Given this reality, those who manage the government in its various relationships with citizens might have to figure out how to ensure that those transactions are accessible, engaging, and promote a point of view where individuals are thinking about their rights and responsibilities as citizens and their vision of a good and just society rather than simply advancing their own particular material interests.

### *Moments of Truth*

As a starting point, we might take some advice from a commercial marketing guru named Karl Albrecht. He recommended that business leaders look at each and every particular point of contact that customers have with the firm – whether directly, through the media, or through public discussion – and consider what the individual was learning about the firm and its products through these particular contacts.

To emphasize the importance of this, he called such contacts "moments of truth" – when the customer got some information not only about the quality of a company's product or service, but also about its character and the kind of relationship it intended to have with customers. Of course, only some of these moments of truth involved direct transactions with customers. Many more came from advertising, media reporting, and discussions among individuals in the course of their every-day lives. Not all of these points of contact could be controlled.

But his point was that if a manager of an enterprise was interested in establishing a good relationship with existing and potential customers, then that manager should try to imagine as many potential encounters as they could, and seek to ensure that these moments of truth not only sold the product or service, but also helped to tell a story about the kind of person who would buy this product or service. The idea was to embed the product or service in an attractive idea about the kind of person one was and to make their choice of the particular product or service part of their expression of that identity.

Suppose we managers in the public sector imagined we had the same kind of opportunity and duty. Suppose that we aimed for each "moment of truth" that individuals

experienced with government to constitute a thoughtfully designed and executed exercise in citizenship, that helped individuals understand that they were not just the customers and clients, but also the owners of government, the arbiters of the public value that was being created with the resources of government, and collaborators in the design and production of a good and just society. At the same time, could these moments remind them that the right to participate in the design, production, and consumption of the social conditions that government could produce came with significant responsibilities, including the duty to participate with an openness to learning and taking seriously the values and concerns of others?

Ideally, in the process of deliberating about what we should all do together, each of us should keep in mind three key points. First, our view on that particular issue might depend crucially on how we understand our particular position in society with respect to the issue under consideration. In formulating our view, were we thinking like a client who expected to get a benefit, or a taxpayer who had to pay for it? Were we thinking like a person who wanted to use government authority to control the behavior of others, or someone who thought their rights were being inappropriately limited? Were we thinking like a person on whom a difficult private burden would fall that was more than they could bear, or as someone who was insulated from the particular trouble that would fall on other less resourceful citizens?

Second, it is quite possible that we will occupy all these positions as public policies fall across our individual and collective lives, and that we might gain a different perspective about a given policy if we made the effort to consider how we might be affected in each of these distinct roles. We might find that we have reasons to embrace a much different idea about what would be good or just for us and for the society if we were to consider the question from these different positions.

Third, even if our current position emphasizes one of these positions over another, it might be important to imagine that it was possible we could have ended up in a different position in society, and to think about what policy we would prefer if we did not know what particular position in society we occupied. The philosopher John Rawls has suggested that the best way for individuals to think about the economic, social, and political conditions a good and just society should seek to produce for its citizens is from behind a “veil of ignorance” that obscures what particular position in society they would occupy. Developing the empathy required to achieve that state might be more than most of us can muster. But it might not be impossible for us to remember that we are all arbiters of social as well as individual value, authorizers of government action, individuals who are swept up in public policies as beneficiaries and obligatees, and voluntary co-producers in the creation of our society.

### *The Way Forward*

What concrete actions would allow you as a public manager to find and exploit opportunities to shape the “moments of truth” that could create a stronger sense of citizenship in all the different kinds of encounters you have with citizens is by no means clear and straightforward. But I offer these few ideas (and welcome your additions!):

- 1) Model the values, commitments, and behaviors of citizens in your own encounters with citizens in their varied roles, and in your own working relationships in the workplace. You are an employee of government, but you are also a citizen. And there are certain rights and responsibilities that attach to your role as citizen/employee as well as employee.
- 2) Explore the wide range of experiences – the huge number and variety of “moments of truth” -- your organization has with citizens.
- 3) After listing them, begin thinking about how they might be influenced by actions taken by your agencies, and how the experience of citizenship might be enhanced in those particular moments of truth.

A government of, by, and for the people keeps its eyes and ears open, helps to convene public deliberation, and finds every possible means to help citizens realize a shared vision of a good and just society in decisions large and small. Only by doing so can it continuously improve in efforts to create public value through democratic governance.