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Introduction - Welcome and course overview

Transcript

G'day and welcome, this is Stacey Barr, the Performance Measure Specialist of www.staceybarr.com. Together we are about to start a journey through some very practical steps to help our hard to measure teams find a way to understand their impact and their most important results, and that is irrespective of how complex, or how intangible, or how unpredictable, or how immeasurable they believe their work is.

We all know that if a team isn't measuring their performance then they have little control or influence over their impact, and if they have little control or influence over their impact then they don't really know how well they're fulfilling their purpose. So, we need to find a way to measure them. We need to find a way to measure them that is meaningful to them and engaging as well, maybe even a little bit of fun too.

How to Find Meaningful Measures for Hard to Measure Teams is a great approach, and that's for several reasons. Firstly, it's very inclusive and collaborative, and this means that your team members will have control over what they choose to measure. This is not a process that is going to be done to them, this is process that holds the space for them to find the most meaningful and helpful things for them to measure.

It's also a very logical and commonsense approach, that means it's going to be very easy to learn, it's going to be very easy to implement, and of course for you very easy to guide your teams through it. It's also customer-focused, and that means that it's going to help the team to link their work to the real outcomes that matter.

It's a scalable approach as well, so each time the team works through this process, and of course they can go through it multiple times, they can go through it annually to refresh their measures, they can go through it a bit more frequently if they need to. But, it means that each time they go through it they can improve the scope of what they

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measure, and they can also improve the sophistication of what they measure and how they measure as well.

How to Find Meaningful Measures for Hard to Measure Teams borrows a couple of the techniques from the PuMP® methodology. Now, PuMP® are the performance measurement methodology I created many, many, many years and I've been using with my clients ever since, and it's the basis of another workshop that I run called the Performance Measure Blueprint. These two techniques that we've borrowed from that PuMP® methodology have radically shifted the motivation that many teams in the past have felt for why they come to work each day. So, they're two techniques that I think will have the same impact for your teams as well. Very, very simple, logical, customer-focused, engaging, and inclusive, logical, commonsense, and of course powerful – they work. The difference that you can make by helping hard to measure teams to meaningfully measure their impact is tremendous.

About your presenter, Stacey…

Now, firstly, in case you don't know me that well yet, let me give you just a brief synopsis of how I came to be here talking to you about how to measure teams. My whole focus is to help people get tangibly clear about the results that they really intend to achieve in their business or organisation and to know how to recognise if they are achieving those results and how well they are achieving those results.

Now, performance measurement just happens to be probably the best tool to do this, but it's also a tool that people struggle the most with. So, that's where I've chosen to specialise in, in fact that's where I have specialised for probably about 20 years now. My website, if you haven't already been there is chalk full of free articles about performance measurement, webinar recordings, blog posts, online training courses, workshops, and a whole lot more resources to help you get over those very common struggles that people have with performance measurement. Now if you have questions about how to do measurement better, make sure you go back and visit me at www.staceybarr.com.

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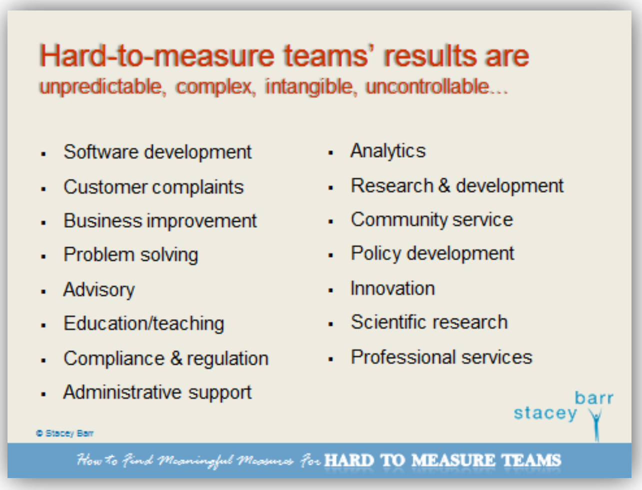
Hard-to-measure teams' results are unpredictable, complex, intangible, uncontrollable…



Almost every business, it's fair to say, has at least one team that's hard to measure. Now, of course not all teams are hard to measure, but the easy ones usually have a few things in common, their customers are easy to define and identify, the outputs they produce are quite clear cut, often very tangible – you can see them, touch them, feel them. Easy to measure teams often have a very good understanding of what they can influence or control in order to improve their performance, and they also have a reasonably good understanding of what it means to work on the business and not just in the business.

Hard to measure teams, on the other hand, tend to have multiple and conflicting customers, or their outputs are quite intangible, and esoteric and hard to touch and feel and see. Often their processes too are quite complex and unpredictable in how well they're going to perform, there's often for hard to measure teams quite a few factors that are external to their process that can influence greatly on the success of their process.

There are many teams like these and here are just a few:

A software development team whose processes can be fairly complex, but whose different applications, different software applications they might be developing can vary greatly in complexity.

Customer complaints teams are sometimes hard to measure, because the impact that they have on customers is not always observable, they can't always tell whether what they've solved or done for the customer has worked. Again, the size of different complaints that customers have can make their work quite unpredictably complex.

Business improvement teams, their outputs are quite often intangible. They're there to help other teams perform better, so how do you judge whether you've successful helped another team perform better? How do you isolate the effect that you've had in that?

- Problem-solving teams; advisory teams; again, quite intangible outcomes.
- An education or a teaching team.

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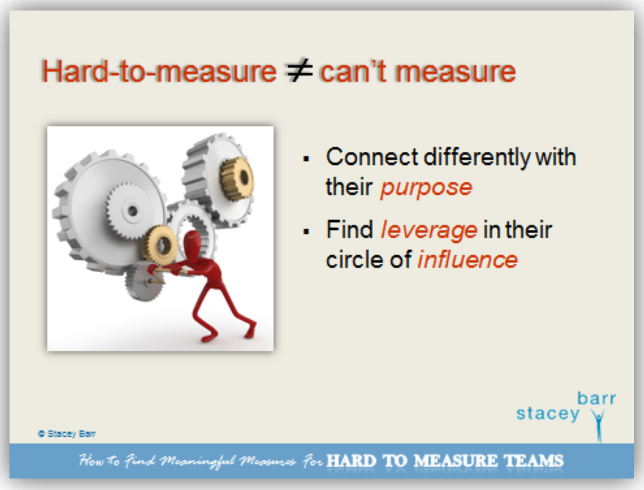
- Compliance and regulation administrative support.
- Analytics.
- Research and development teams.

Teams who contribute to different community outcomes, often in local government you'll find these sorts of teams. The outputs or outcomes that they produce are affected by a wide range of factors outside their control.

- Policy development.
- Innovation teams.
- Scientific research.
- And, professional services.

I mean that's heaps, isn't it? But, that's just a starting point of potential hard to measure teams. These hard to measure teams have probably been stuck in a rut for a very long time, and that rut is that they truly believe their work is not measurable in a meaningful way. They've built up a resistance to measurement in a sense, and the only way to change that resistance to measurement is to help them have a shift in their thinking.

Hard-to-measure ≠ can't measure



Hard to measure teams have to be measurable. I mean really it's logical, if they exist to produce a real impact, to make a real and valued difference for somebody or some group, then we simply have to know how to recognise that difference that they make. If you can't recognise the difference that they're making, then what are they really doing; nothing of value.

They also must be able to influence the difference that they make through their work, its direct cause and effect, really. To appreciate this I reckon that teams need to do a couple of things. One is to reconnect with their purpose in a fresh way, so that they can get more intimate, I suppose, with the impact that they have, with the difference that they make.

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And, secondly, they need to know that they can find leverage in their work processes, or in their circle of influence, to have more control or influence over the difference that they make and fulfilling their purpose.

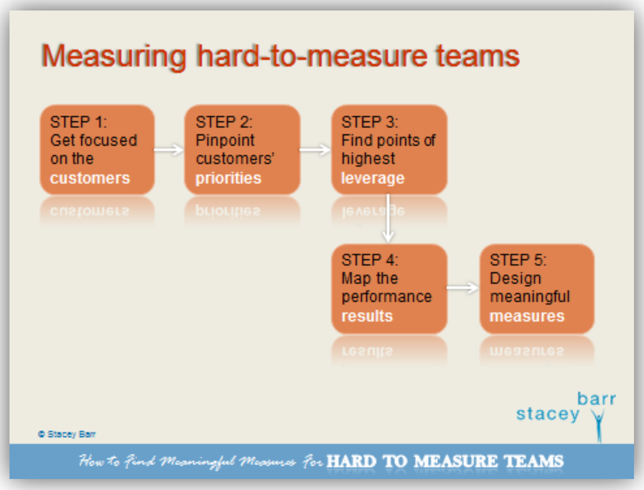
What this means is that teams need to start seeing that measurement is a natural part of their real work, it's not a bureaucratic hoop to jump through, it's something that definitely helps them focus on more meaningful things, on the right things. They also need to start seeing that measures are not about ticking the box, measures are about deeply understanding the results that matter and fulfilling their purpose.

They also need to start regaining a perspective much broader than the pile of work that they turn up to do each day, and that has to be broad enough that it includes a really great appreciation for their customers and for what their customers really want.

And, also they need to start discovering how much leverage they actually do have in changing how they work, the idea being here that they know that they can work smarter and that improving performance is definitely not about working harder, or very rarely is it about working harder. It's not about throwing more resources at things in order to get better, it's about with the resources we've got changing the way we use those resources to get things to be better.

And quite honestly it doesn't matter if others in the business or organisation, like maybe other teams or even managers don't think this way about measurement yet either, the point is it's got to start somewhere and you're here listening to this because you have a team that is hard to measure, so it's only natural that they are the right place to start. And, with this process we're about to delve into it can start with you and your teams, and probably a lot easier than they think.

Measuring hard-to-measure teams



So, there are five steps to measuring hard to measure teams, and the first step is called get focused on the customers. It's quite a simple step, this one, quite easy. It is about connecting with customers as people, to bring them to life in the team's daily work. And, what I mean by connecting with them as people is that it's not about connecting with them as a customer segment, or a market segment, because those things are inanimate and impersonal, something that's going to help

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your team really appreciate and value what they do and the difference they make in the world is to understand exactly who they're doing that for and that means having a much more intimate and personal connection with their customers.

When they've done that Step 2 becomes the natural next place to go, and this is about pinpointing customers' priorities. This means finding the one or two, or maybe three most important outcomes to customers that the team should focus on now – I say 'now' because often these priorities can change over time, as the team focuses on one priority and gets very, very good at performing in that priority and delivering that outcome to their customers, that will fall off the customers' radar to some extent, and other new priorities will come up. So, this really is about a continual improvement process, continually getting in touch with what the customers' current priorities are and using that to set the direction for what the team should focus on and measure.

Step 3 helps us to get our teams confident that they have some level of influence over those customer priorities. It's about finding points of highest leverage, which means digging into the team's work process to find out how they can change what they do to improve the outcomes for customers. So this is where the cause/effect comes in, when the team understands what influence they have, they can change things within their process, they can perform better at certain things within their process that have a cause/effect relationship to the outcomes that matter most to their customers.

So, these first three steps are very much about understanding what the important things are for your team to focus on, the important things that sum up their impact, that sum up the things they really do need to perform well at.

The next step, Step 4, is in a sense a consolidation step, 'map the performance results' means creating a single map of those performance results that encapsulate the customers' priorities, the purpose of their work process, and the points of greatest leverage within their work process – encapsulating all of that into a single map that is a cause/effect diagram of the teams' most important performance results. Having them encapsulated in a single map makes it easy for the team to keep focusing on those and it also helps to make their work more measurable, and that leads us to Step 5, which is to design meaningful measures. This is about your team choosing the best measures for their performance results, but they do not have to rely on brainstorming or any of those methods that have failed them in the past, this is a very deliberate approach to designing meaningful measures.

Now, I did mention, just before, that we're going to borrow two techniques from the PuMP® methodology, and Step 4 and 5 is where we borrow those techniques. In Step 4 the technique is called Results Mapping, and in Step 5 the technique is called Measure Design, and they will be a very powerful duo of techniques that will really transform the way your team thinks about measurement and also how they think about why they come to work each day.

To help you apply all of the little tasks that are associated with each of these five steps what I have for you is a workbook. Now, it's in Word format and it's on the course web page for you to download. I'll just take you there now… now, you can tell by this little

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window that's come up that I have loads of resources to share with you. I'm just going to find the one that I want to show you now, which is this one. This is the template that will guide you through all five steps. Now, I'm not going to take you through all of it in detail right now, because you're going to see how it works through bunch of case studies that we're going to look at as we go through the five steps, and it's fairly logical and commonsense, so not a lot of it needs explaining. I want to show you now simply how it's laid it, because even after these first couple of steps you might already be ready to apply this with your team.

Now, at the beginning you'll have a little section here where you're going to just describe who your team is, and obviously in the title give them a name. Each step has a section of its own and a heading here. So, you'll recall from the flowchart that we just looked at that Step1 is to get your team customer-focused. There's a few sub-steps within Step 1, and each of them has a little instruction for you. Now none of the sub-steps are really hard, it's more just about being systematic and logical and laying it out for you. But, you can see there's places like tables and areas for you to fill bits in following the instructions that I'll be giving you. So, make sure that you've downloaded that workbook before you're ready to start applying what you learn, because it will be a great tool to help you implement it with your teams.

End of transcript.