

customers to other products or services at the point of sale, in this case, the bank. The merchandising budget was for signs, banners, window decals, fliers, and lobby displays.

One of the bank's products was free checking with no minimum balance for three years. To determine the return on investment of the merchandising effort, the bank asked its branch managers to track the number of new checking accounts opened over a one-month period. Free checking is a loss leader, however; customers who want free checking usually have low-balance accounts, which makes them the most costly accounts to service. Banks therefore lose money on free checking accounts. Measuring only the number of new free checking accounts does not accurately measure the return on investment for the merchandising campaign.

The HR director for a municipal government developed a new performance appraisal process. The municipality's employees were all unionized, and the union had negotiated that performance measures and salary could not be linked. The HR director wanted to prove there was nevertheless a benefit to adopting a new performance appraisal process and convinced management that a new performance appraisal form would have value and increase productivity despite the union contract. The director suggested that they measure the form's effectiveness based on how many managers used it. However, the number of managers using the form has no bearing on productivity. Other criteria were needed before HR could prove that the cost to develop the form and train managers how to use it was worth the investment.

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These stories illustrate two common measurement problems: insufficient criteria and inappropriate criteria and metrics:

- *Insufficient criteria.* In each case, only one criterion (the number of transactions, new checking accounts, and managers who used the process) was used. Other measures the retailer might have used were the number of add-on transactions (transactions for items that were not part of the promotion), the margin (profit) that resulted from those other transactions, and how much the overall sales volume changed. The retailer could then have compared these measures to the cost of the promotion, which included the costs of advertisements and printed collateral materials and the amount of time it took sales clerks off the floor to be briefed on the promotion. In the case of the new appraisal process, the HR department could have measured whether performance had improved, how the process affected development, or if it reduced turnover.