

**Evaluative Feedback: Performance and Results of Performance Vistas, Inc. Contract with DSS '00-'01  
Respondent: Bo Galliher, Director SD&T**

**Service Orientation**

1. How satisfied are you with the *responsiveness* of PVI in meeting the needs of DSS under the contract?  
*Considering how often DSS shifts your tasks around, PVI is very responsive. You're here when we need you. I cannot think of a time when you had a prior commitment that kept you from being available when we needed you. Score: 9*
2. How satisfied are you with PVI's *communication* with your agency?  
*Those who are involved with you (PVI) are kept current. Your monthly reports are very good, and helpful. Few consultants will do this kind of status reporting for us. I read them thoroughly every month, and use them to brief my boss. You help us keep track of the various initiatives we are working on together. Score: 9*
3. How satisfied are you with PVI's *availability* to your agency?  
*You're there when we need you. You are spending about the right amount of time on site in South Carolina as far as I'm concerned. Score: 9*
4. How satisfied are you with the *professional attitudes and appearance* of PVI's staff?  
*Your team has always been very professional, courteous and respectful to all our staff. Score: 9*
5. How satisfied are you with the *preparation* of PVI's staff?  
*You guys are always well prepared. No one ever wonders if you'll be ready for a presentation or a session. Score: 9*
6. How satisfied are you with the *timeliness* of any products PVI has produced under the contract?  
*The nature of the workload analyses creates a time lag that is hard to understand if someone higher in the organization doesn't know what it takes to get the work groups satisfied with the workload findings. That can make it seem sometimes as if PVI is slow turning around those kinds of reports. Then we go ahead and task you to start something different, and the concluding summary gets delayed further. I think you also have to consider how much time is sufficient to allow the work groups made up of our staff to work out the details of such things as the activity descriptions. Other products are very timely, so I wouldn't really mark your score down for this. Score: 9*

**Quality of Services**

1. How satisfied are you with the *overall quality of services* provided by PVI through its 2000-01 contract?  
*I give you all a "10" because overall, I can't imagine a better contractor for the things we ask PVI to do for us. Score: 10*
2. How satisfied are you with the *accuracy of any products* PVI has produced under the contract?  
*No doubt in my mind that your work is always as accurate as any can be. Very good. Score: 10*
3. How satisfied are you with the *usefulness of any products* PVI has produced under the contract?  
*That depends of course on which product we're talking about. Many of our efforts are still in progress. Many are long-term in nature (e.g., strategic plan), and so it's not reasonable to judge those yet. But the training materials PVI produces for us, the workload analyses, and other products have been very useful. Score: 10*
4. How satisfied are you with the *participation* of PVI staff in meetings conducted under the contract?  
*I can only think of a few times when I wish one of you all had been here for an important meeting, but you were not. It is not your fault when we fail to plan for the event in advance. Sometimes issues arise that need immediate attention. If we need your counsel, you are generally available by phone. For meetings and other kinds of activities, we use PVI people as if they were part of our staff. You are here when we need you. Score: 10*
5. How satisfied are you with the *facilitation* by PVI staff of meetings conducted under the contract?  
*You're the best. You have done a fantastic job for us in this area. When the State Director says she wants you guys to facilitate a meeting for her, that's an endorsement for what I'm talking about. Score: 10*
6. How satisfied are you with the *effectiveness of the services* provided by PVI under the 2000-01 contract?  
*The work you are doing with us is of tremendous value to the Department and our clients. You are involved in practically everything that's important to us right now. Score: 10*

7. Has the *quality of PVI's services improved* over last year's services? If so, in what ways?  
*When we have moved ahead at DSS we have moved ahead together with PVI. You have kept aware of the changing situation here, and pushed when needed, and backed off when that was needed. PVI's skills have improved as the need demanded it, and you all have stepped up, as we have needed it. Score: 10*

## Results

1. To what extent has PVI been successful in the development of planning and evaluation systems at DSS?  
*PVI has had a great deal of impact on DSS. We have been taking "baby" steps here as it relates to organizational change, and not everyone is on the same level of grasping the process. But many have figured out what we need to do with assessment and planning, and are managing well. They are on target. There's still a group of county managers that need help, but they realize that need, and are getting help. I would say that there are fewer than ten managers in the counties who are resistant to these initiatives, and that's pretty good for us. PVI has engaged the key state leaders and county leaders, and all are beginning to come together with better performance on self-appraisals, data collection, action plans, and continuous improvements. We have more room to improve in the area of program evaluation, but that has as much to do with inconsistent approaches to research at the state level as anything.*
2. To what extent has PVI been successful in enhancing cooperation and communication among DSS divisions and within their various units?  
*This is hard to assess at this stage. You know, you can facilitate communication without really "enhancing cooperation." That's where I think we are now. PVI has definitely helped DSS leaders find approaches that are working, such as getting a handle on the performance in the field. But we still have a lot to accomplish if we want the same degree of cooperation among state office divisions that has been achieved among the county operations. It's been a real success story when we think about cooperation among the 46 county directors, between them and the state Operations division, and in the development of the Operations Management Support Services units. PVI has had a big role in those successes. At the state level, we have an Executive Management Committee recommending a full-scale strategic planning process and our State Director who is "on board" and providing direction. Her leadership should make it easier to bring people together as we continue the strategic planning process.*
3. A major goal of the PVI contract has been to build the capacity of DSS. How successful have we been in accomplishing this goal?  
*The Deputy for Operations said it yesterday, as we were talking about how much we are learning about county strengths and weaknesses right now, "We couldn't have done this without you guys at PVI." I agree with that assessment. Consider one of our leaders: He is not the same person he was when you guys started working with us. He is now engaging the various division leaders in addressing issues that affect operations and he has a mastery of the tools we have been building through our contract (e.g., workload data).*
4. What results did DSS produce as a result of PVI's involvement?  
*This one is easier to answer. Are we managing our human resources better because PVI has been working with us? Hell, yes! Do people have a better understanding of the problems and issues they must manage to succeed and improve in their daily operations? YES! Do we know how to identify performance issues and develop plans for action to do something about it? I think we do, although our skills range from mediocre to very strong. Do people believe we are serious about managing with performance data? Yes, and we have come a long way in this area, but you never get as good as you want to be, so we'll keep trying to get better. Are people getting better training because of PVI's participation with our trainers and our curriculum developers? No question about it, yes. It is more targeted than in the past. Have we had the impact on unit performance we were hoping for? I don't know, and it bothers me that I don't know. Participant evaluations are good. However, we are still trying to figure out the actual impact of training. I do know that demand for training has increased. You guys at PVI have been a big part of these successes.*

## Improvement Suggestions

**Think about the time you were most disappointed with PVI. Please tell us what went wrong, how it was resolved, and how you wish it had turned out.**

*I can't think of such a time. I know I can get disappointed when we are gaining momentum on an initiative, only to have it slowed or stopped because we (DSS) do a "180 degree turnaround" and try tackling something else. That's not PVI's fault. But once we're poised to get something very good accomplished, I appreciate a nudge from PVI to help us keep our focus and follow through. We reach a target, and we're ready to do something very good for the organization, and someone pulls us (as well as you guys) off it. Maybe you need to come to me and say, "We can do that new thing, but here's what might happen to what we've been working on if you don't persevere." This is the kind of nudge I'm referring to. We need unbiased input when making such decisions, rather than managing work activities based on individual whims.*

**Think about the time you were most pleased with PVI. Please tell us what went well, how it ended, and how you would like us to apply the lesson to our other work with DSS.**

*I guess that would be right now, as we are ready to bring the divisions into a comprehensive strategic planning process. I am very encouraged by the support the State Director is showing. But total satisfaction on this would depend on some very complicated things falling into place. It continues to depend on leadership's responses and support. Our State Director will have many opportunities to show this support, starting with engaging the Deputy Directors in a dialogue about the recommendation on strategic planning coming from the Executive Management Committee. When she starts encouraging these this group to begin negotiating planning roles things will start moving. Until then, what can we do to set it up for success? Talk it up, help them get together and "paper the walls" with their ideas about the goals of the entire agency, not just individual divisions.*

**What is the most important thing you think PVI should do to improve for the next year?**

*I can't think of anything "mechanical" as you suggest (e.g., timing, reporting, hours on site, etc.). You should continue to use that "folksy" style that you guys' use. You are a part of us, as if you were one of us. Keep working with us, alongside us. You have skills that we may have, but we don't have the concentrated time or energy to do what you do for us. Besides, you have skills that we do NOT have, so we engage you to use them with us and help us learn new ways of doing business. Those skills and processes put us in a different light, ready to get things done. I would also say you should plan on stepping up your attention to the Operations Management Support units – where they have shown so much strength and potential. Your role in helping us to accomplish the strategic planning process, in concert with the Baldrige criteria, as expected by the Governor's Office and the State Legislature, will require your best skills. I'd also like you to keep involved in the supervisory training systems we are building, particularly to make sure that future generations of supervisory training capture the Baldrige skills we'll need to do continuous planning and self-improvement. In the future, as the management/supervisory training track evolves, we will need help with a review and follow-up to determine if we are making a difference in on the job performance. You also need to prepare for a possible role in helping us integrate the outputs/outcomes from our involvement with the Casey Foundation – Family to Families initiative and our work with the National Network for Child Safety.*