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How Can We Improve Government Performance? Implementation Context and Key Factors Affecting Performance Outcomes

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How Can We Improve Government Performance? Implementation Context and Key Factors Affecting Performance Outcomes

Drawing upon my empirical research and the public administration literature, I illustrate the key factors that affect government performance taking into account the implementation context. Three key implications of this analysis are:

- 1. Management quality is often a critical factor affecting performance outcomes.
- 2. Providing additional resources will not improve performance without good management.
- 3. Often the nature of the problem and/or political conditions prevent government agencies from achieving desired outcomes.

Policy Implementation Model

Performance Outcomes =

Statutory Structure:
Policy Design and Resource Level

+

Non-Statutory Factors:

Political Conditions and Implementer
Characteristics (e.g., Management Quality & Policy Disposition)

+

Problem Tractability:
Problem Severity, Nature, and Scope

Source: *Implementation and Public Policy* by Richard A. Mazmanian and Paul A. Sabatier, 1989

	Political Conflict		
	Low		High
Difficulty		Administrative Implementation Key Performance Factors = Management Quality & Resources	Political Implementation: Key Performance Factors = Political Conditions, Management Quality, & Resources
Last		Experimental Implementation Key Performance Factors = Problem Nature & Resources	Symbolic Implementation Key Performance Factors = Political Conditions, Problem Nature, & Resources

Adapted from: Matland, R. E (1989) Synthesizing the Implementation Literature: The Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation.

Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 5(2), 145-174.

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