

FOCUSING ON RESULTS

The focus of performance measurement is results and outcomes. All the activities associated with the County's performance measurement process are driven by a desire to achieve results and outcomes that benefit the residents of Fairfax County. In the overall context of performance measurement, it is important to maintain focus on the purpose of why we measure. Simply put, developing performance measures, surveying for customer satisfaction, and data collection are insufficient in and of themselves, and only serve as a means to an end. The end of the performance measurement process, however, is to achieve results (outcomes) that focus on customer satisfaction, and improving processes, products, programs and services to meet those customer needs and expectations insofar as they are feasible within reason. Consequently, it is imperative not only to measure performance, but to also manage performance for results. In many instances, good is not good enough. The following chart illustrates this point quite clearly:

If 99.9% Is Good Enough, Then...

- **12 newborns will be given to the wrong parents daily**
- **18,322 pieces of mail will be mishandled every hour**
- **2,000,000 documents will be lost by the IRS this year**
- **315 entries in Webster's Dictionary will be misspelled**
- **20,000 incorrect drug prescriptions will be written this year**
- **103,260 income tax returns will be processed incorrectly this year**
- **3,056 copies of tomorrow's *Wall Street Journal* will be missing one of the paper's three sections**
- **880,000 credit cards in circulation will turn out to have incorrect cardholder information on their magnetic strips**
- **291 pacemaker operations will be performed incorrectly**
- **What does a 0.1% error rate mean to your County agency's performance measurement metrics?**