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Outcomes effectiveness:
Achieving organisational goals



With over 25 years' experience as lawyer, leadership adviser, writer and speaker in New Zealand, Australia, Europe, USA and elsewhere, Dr Pol's practical expertise is supported by scientific rigour and outcome-oriented critical thinking.

Experience with leading law firms and in-house roles in four countries include directing major disputes for outcomes; and systematically reducing organisational risk. Dr Pol was also appointed to the NZ Law Society governing Council and led New Zealand's corporate lawyers' association. Leadership advisory work and acting general counsel appointments in public agencies and the private sector were often focused on meeting key organisational outcomes in complex environments.

Framed in outcomes and policy effectiveness, Dr Pol's thesis filled an evidence gap in an area with 'super wicked' problems, seemingly insoluble. Anti-money laundering measures are globally ubiquitous, yet arguably the least effective policy, regulatory and enforcement endeavour, ever, anywhere: a valuable resource for transferrable policy effectiveness insights.

In broader areas of corporate and policy endeavour, consistent with organisations drawing from evidence-informed, outcome-oriented frameworks, Dr Pol's professional expertise is focused on outcomes effectiveness. Not just whether goals and strategies have been set, or implemented, or even if targets have been met, but whether they work. Have high-order organisational objectives been achieved? Despite its capacity for enabling demonstrably improved outcomes, aligned with organisational strategic objectives, this line of enquiry remains surprisingly rare.

A key feature of Dr Pol's practical application of this fundamental issue in corporate and public endeavour is the distinction between inputs, activities and outputs, and outcomes. Meaningfully distinguishing these concepts is a defining feature of leadership.

For example, a bigger compliance budget (inputs) or more training sessions (outputs) tells us little about meaningful improvements in an organisation's risk profile. Even the absence of regulatory sanction may be an important output indicator *towards*, but is not a direct measure *of*, outcome effectiveness. Similarly, in nearly every facet of goal-oriented endeavour, including target-setting, procurement, etc.

'Outputs' are easy to measure. They may be necessary, and often positively influence outcomes, yet initiatives and activity from the outset focused on ultimate strategy objectives have greater chance of success than those measuring, and thereby drawing resources towards, intermediate activities and output targets.

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted." W B Cameron

Dr Pol is currently developing a series of organisational and policy strategies for helping improve outcome effectiveness, beyond the 'success' rhetoric of activity and output targets often mislabeled 'outcomes'.