
Behavioral Performance Analysis

**A Process Introduction
from
Daniel Follette, Inc.**

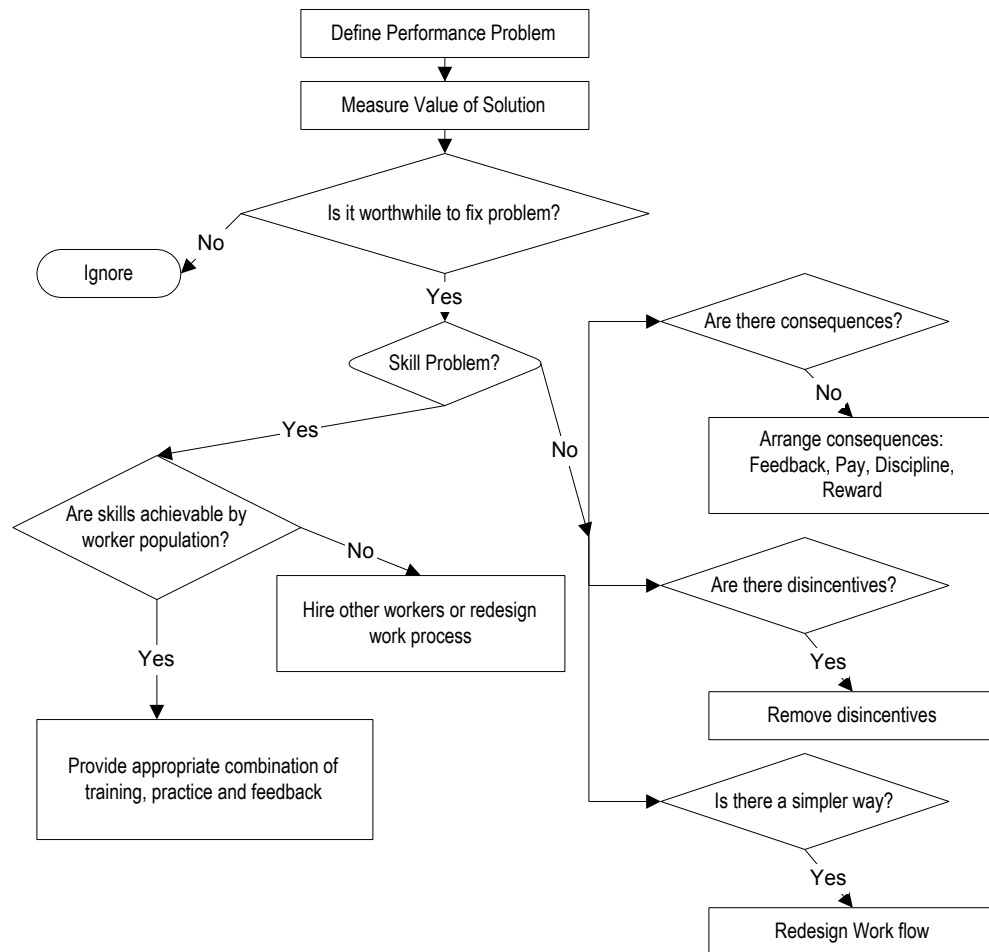
Behavioral Performance Analysis

Analyzing performance discrepancies: work analysis flow chart

To manage anything, you must be able to observe it and measure it. Daniel Follette, Inc. provides proprietary processes to define work in meaningful, behavioral terms that satisfy the demands of quality programs. The analyses produce statements that define the exact performance and criteria that define successful performance.

Tangible description of work expectations is one of the principal tenants of the quality movement.

We've found that this performance model (based on the one developed by Bob Mager) works very well in most work environments. The following paragraphs summarize what is done in each step.



Defining performance discrepancies

The issue is simple, people either are doing what you expect or are not. And explicit descriptions of the expected behavior and actual performance make problems crystal clear. We begin with general performances such as “The employee produces a ten percent scrap rate.” Then we drill down to the specific behaviors that measure failure or success in specific actions such as mold preparation, gel application or lay-up. We get clear descriptions of the expected actions and quality requirements and measures of the variance from them.

Measuring costs of performance discrepancies: What does the problem cost you?

Since any analysis and performance improvement program represents investment of resources, you want to estimate the potential return the investment could provide. One part of the return equals the current cost of the discrepancy. Correcting the problem will remove that cost from the bottom line.

Other consequences are conditional and less direct. For example, your difficulties with delivery may put a contract at risk. To estimate that cost, you can multiply the value of the business by risk/probability factors that you use. Still other consequences may exist in increased levels of injury or exposure, or in the cost of insurance coverage.

Performance discrepancies may also stand in the way of more efficient work methods that could further reduce costs beyond the simple elimination of costs. Analysis might reveal further opportunities to improve productivity. These opportunities should also be considered in measuring the cost of current work methods. (Our paper on skill-based pay provides more information on measuring opportunities.)

Is a problem worth correcting?

Your decision to address a problem has an economic basis. To decide if the economics fit, you need also to estimate the cost of your corrective action. When you know the cost of a problem and the cost of improvement, you just have to compare that to your ROI model to decide whether to invest or not. (Some other issues, such as safety and contract maintenance may override economics.)

Is the basis of the problem in performance competence or environmental factors?

More often than not, employees can, or could, perform according to expectations. Often other work issues stand in the way of successful performance. Successful performance may be punishing. There may be a benefit to not doing the work correctly. There may be no consequence for successful or incorrect performance or there may be obstacles to performance. All these possibilities must be reviewed to arrive at success.

Providing information about performance

Employees need feedback on their performance. This means providing clear definitions of what is expected, clear feedback on how their performance measures up and appropriate positive or negative consequences.

Removing obstacles to performance: work process redesign

Employees may be able to perform the work successfully and may want to perform successfully but there may be obstacles or disincentives that prevent them from doing so. Our analysis looks at factors that might create this kind of conflict and identifies ways to resolve it.

Is the expected performance achievable?

Sometimes the work and the person are a bad match. Trying to foster a performance that is beyond the capability of an individual is a futile, frustrating and humiliating

endeavor. These conflicts may exist on individual bases or in a bad match between the employee population and job expectations. Before looking into training or specific individual

performances, it is important to analyze the work against the capabilities of the general worker population before making decisions about developing training or addressing individual performance issues. If there is a conflict, you need to decide whether to change the job or change the population. There are costs associated with both options to be considered.

Skill development

Several factors contribute to skill competency. People may need training, but often, other skill issues are involved. For example, a person may be able to describe the correct performance but may not have enough practice to be able to perform it well. Or a person may be able to perform well, but has no feedback to tell him or her that the work is not meeting expectations. All these factors must be considered in skill development.

Forging solutions

Typically a successful program incorporates a number of elements. These may include training, quality initiatives, compensation and restaffing. The successful selection of elements depends on rigorous, clear analysis. The implementation of each element requires special skills and experience not detailed in this paper.

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