Quick-Reference Chart for Analyzing Performance Problems

1. Describe performance discrepancy
   - Ignore
   - Important?
     - Yes
       - Skill deficiency?
         - Yes
           - Performance punishing?
             - Yes
               - Remove punishment
             - No
               - Nonperformance rewarding?
                 - Yes
                   - Arrange positive consequence
                 - No
                   - Performance matters?
                     - Yes
                       - Arrange consequence
                     - No
                       - Obstacles?
                         - Yes
                           - Remove obstacles
                         - No
                           - Simpler way?
                             - Yes
                               - Change job
                             - No
                               - Has potential?
                                 - Yes
                                   - Select best solution(s)
                                 - No
                                   - Transfer or terminate
   - No
     - Used to do it?
       - Yes
         - Arrange formal training
       - No
         - Used often?
           - Yes
             - Arrange practice
           - No
             - Arrange feedback
     - No
       - Change job
       - Arrange on-job training

2. Implement solution(s)
Quick-Reference Checklist

<table>
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<th>Key Questions to Answer</th>
<th>Probe Questions</th>
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<td><strong>I. They’re not doing what they should be doing. I think I’ve got a training problem.</strong></td>
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| 1. What is the performance discrepancy? | • Why do I think there is a training problem?  
• What is the difference between what is being done and what is supposed to be done?  
• What is the event that causes me to say that things aren’t right?  
• Why am I dissatisfied? |
| 2. Is it important? | • Why is the discrepancy important?  
• What would happen if I left the discrepancy alone?  
• Could doing something to resolve the discrepancy have any worthwhile result? |
| 3. Is it a skill deficiency? | • Could the person do it if really required to do it?  
• Could the person do it if his or her life depended on it?  
• Are the person’s present skills adequate for the desired performance? |
| **II. Yes. It is a skill deficiency. They couldn’t do it if their lives depended on it.** |  |  |
| 4. Could they do it in the past? | • Did the person once know how to perform as desired?  
• Has the person forgotten how to do what I want done? |
| 5. Is the skill used often? | • How often is the skill or performance used?  
• Is there regular feedback on performance?  
• Exactly how does the person find out how well he or she is doing? |
| 6. Is there a simpler solution? | • Can I change the job by providing some kind of job aid?  
• Can I store the needed information some way (in written instructions, checklists) other than in someone’s head?  
• Can I show rather than train?  
• Would informal (such as on-the-job) training be sufficient? |
| 7. Do they have what it takes? | • Could the person learn the job (is the individual trainable)?  
• Does this person have the physical and mental potential to perform as desired?  
• Is this person overqualified for the job? |

### III. It is not a skill deficiency. *They could do it if they wanted to.*

| 8. Is desired performance punishing? | • What is the consequence of performing as desired?  
• Is it punishing to perform as expected?  
• Does the person perceive desired performance as being geared toward penalties?  
• Would the person’s world become a little dimmer if the desired performance were attained? |
| 9. Is nonperformance rewarding? | • What is the result of doing it the present way instead of my way?  
• What does the person get out of the present performance in the way of reward, prestige, status, jollies?  
• Dopes the person get more attention for misbehaving than behaving?  
• What event in the world supports (rewards) the present way of doing things? (Am I inadvertently rewarding irrelevant behavior while overlooking the crucial behaviors?)  
• Is this person “mentally inadequate,” doing less so that there is less to worry about? |
| 10. Does performing really matter to them? | • Does performing as desired matter to the performer?  
• Is there a favorable outcome for performing?  
• Is there an undesirable outcome for not performing?  
• Is there a source of satisfaction for performing?  
• Can this person take pride in this performance as an individual or as a member of a group?  
• Is there satisfaction of personal needs from the job? |
| --- | --- |
| 11. Are there obstacles to performing? | • What prevents this person from performing?  
• Does the person know what is expected?  
• Does the person know what to do what is expected?  
• Does the person know when to do what is expected?  
• Are there conflicting demands on this person’s time?  
• Does the person lack … the authority?  
… the time?  
… the tools?  
• Are there restrictive policies, or a “right way of doing it,” or a “way we’ve always done it” that ought to be changed?  
• Can I reduce interference by … improving lighting?  
… changing colors?  
… increasing comfort?  
… modifying the work position?  
… reducing visual or auditory distractions?  
• Can I reduce “competition from the job” – phone calls, “brush fires,” demands of less important but more immediate problems? |
IV. What should I do now?

12. Which solution is best?

- Have all the potential solutions been identified?
- Does each solution address itself to one or more problems identified during the analysis (such as skill deficiency, absence of potential, incorrect rewards, punishing consequences, distracting obstacles)?
- What is the cost of each potential solution?
- Have the intangible (unmeasurable) costs been assessed?
- Which solution is most practical, feasible, and economical?
- Which solution will add most value (solve the largest part of the problem for the least effort)?
- Which remedy is likely to give us the most result for the least effort
- Which solution are we best equipped to try?
- Which remedy interests us most? (Or, on the other side of the coin, which remedy is most visible to those who must be pleased?)

Adapted from: