

Identifying Performance Problems

Introduction

Objective: Although there are normally several solutions to a problem, it is only by getting to the root problem that a solution can be devised.

Perform the activity below, using the Performance Analysis Matrix, and then discuss the following questions:

How does the definition of a performance problem impact upon the general strategy for solving it? (See four quadrants)

Considering the employee performance problems in your organization, is there any pattern to the form they take? (e.g. are most in Quadrant A?)

What implications does this model have for the role of a supervisor as a problem-solver?

Activity - Knowing vs. Doing

Objective: Identify performance problems.

Procedure: Direct the learner to draw a mental image of an employee they know who is not performing adequately.

With their knowledge of the facts available, ask them to select an intersection point in the Performance Analysis Matrix (shown below) that best portrays their answers to the two questions on the vertical and horizontal axes dealing with knowledge and attitude.

Discuss answers and then explain how such analysis might provide clues to the four different solutions.

Basic Reasons Why Employees Do Not Perform Well

Lack of Skills: This is mainly an employer responsibility – need to supply training.

- Never had them
- Needs practice
- Can't apply them

Lack of Information: This is also an employer responsibility – need to supply information or train how to use or collect readily available information.

- Does not know expectations
- Does not have current data
- Cannot apply information that was there

Motivational Issues: Employer and employee jointly responsible – requires mutual discussion.

- Things and people that make work punishing (feels they are working in a hostile environment)
- Personal attitudes and issues

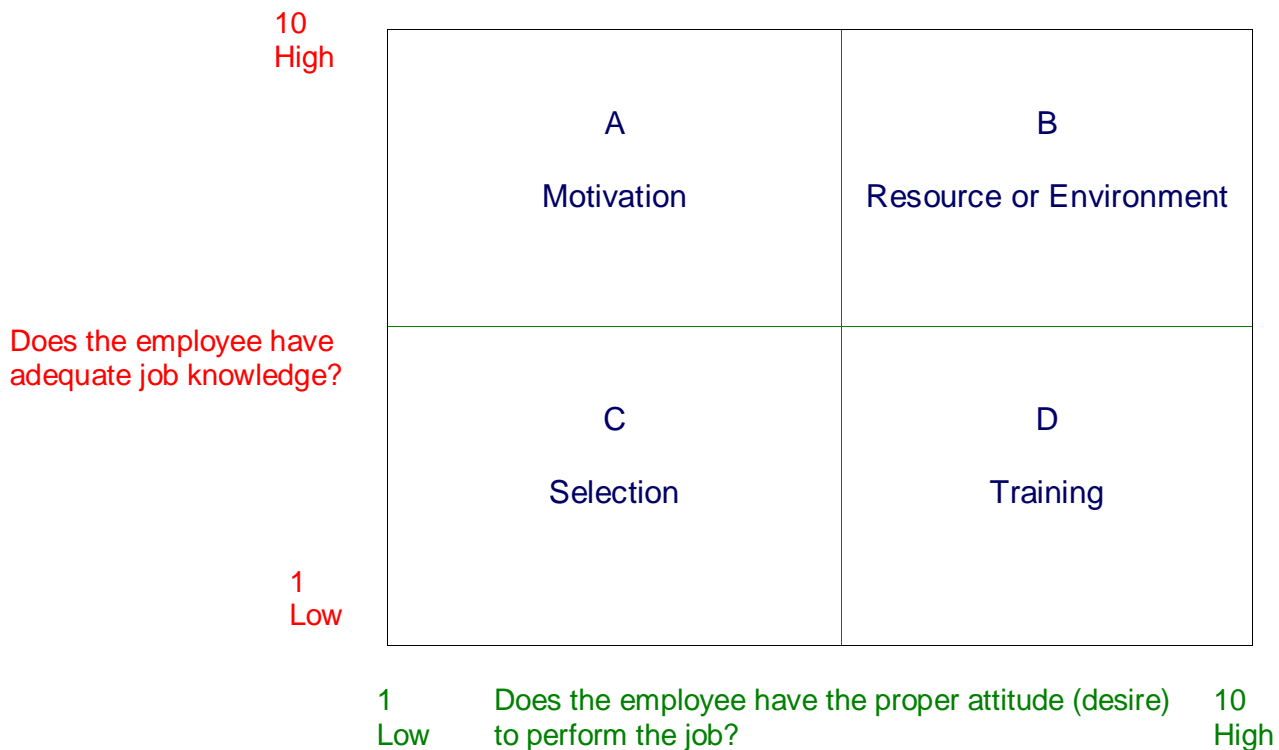
Personal Issues: Employee responsibility – needs to take charge of life

- Substance abuse
- Emotional health
- Physical health
- Lifestyle

Environmental Issues: Employer Responsibility – redesign is needed

- Unrealistic standards
- Poor work station design
- Inadequate tools available
- Process needs improvement

Performance Analysis Matrix



- Plot the employee's Knowledge, from 1 – 10, on the Knowledge Line.

- Plot the employee's Attitude, from 1 – 10, on the Attitude Line.

Where the marks intersect, is the Performance Quadrant the employee is in.

Quadrant A: If the employee has sufficient job knowledge but has an improper attitude, this may be classed as motivational problem. The consequences (rewards) of the person's behavior will have to be adjusted.

Quadrant B: If the employee has both job knowledge and a favorable attitude, but performance is unsatisfactory, then the problem may be out of control of the employee. i.e. resources are lacking, time pressures. An environmental analysis is called for.

Quadrant C: If the employee lacks both job knowledge and a favorable attitude, that person may be improperly placed in the position. This may imply a problem with employee selection, and suggest that transfer or discharge should be considered

Quadrant D: If the employee desires to perform, but lacks the requisite job knowledge or skills, then additional training may be the answer.

Developed from <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/council.html>