

WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS



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Workplace Performance Analysis

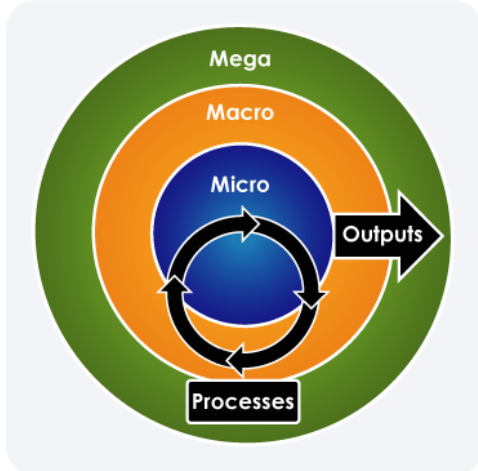
In many cases, training and education programs are developed without a direct correlation to what specific performance needs they are supposed to address. This may be acceptable in academic fields but can be an enormous waste of resources in the workplace.

“The danger in leaping from apparent problem to apparent solution is that large amounts of time and money can be spent in throwing training at a problem that training cannot solve. You need to dig a little deeper. This is why a procedure like performance analysis is important to those who actually want to solve problems – rather than just talk about them.”¹

Performance analysis is the process by which you identify and respond to problems and opportunities, through the study of individuals and their organization to determine an appropriate solution system. Think of performance analysis as analogous to a physician's diagnostic process.

A **Performance Analysis** is usually conducted as a preliminary study (up front and fast) of the situation to identify possible solutions to a performance problem.

Figure 1: Alignment



The first step in examining workplace performance is to look at the how the organisation is aligned between its environment and its workers. The **Mega**² level addresses the connection between the organisation and community & society.

The **Macro** level looks at how the organisation itself functions and the **Micro** level addresses the needs of teams, groups, individuals. For instance, the Mega focus looks

¹ Mager & Pipe in *Analyzing Performance Problems* (1997)

² Terms Mega, Macro & Micro from Kaufman, et al in *Strategic Planning for Success: Aligning People, Performance, and Payoffs* (2003)



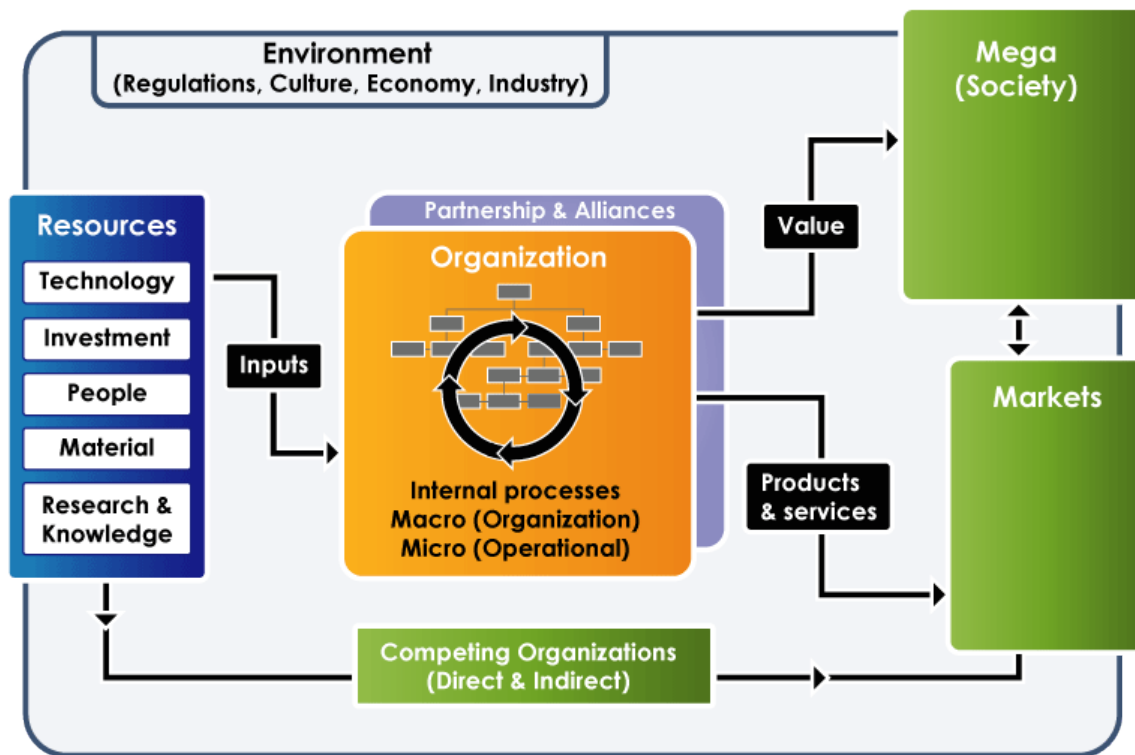
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at long-term core values. Proper alignment of these values can help to avoid problems such as those experienced by Enron, Arthur Anderson or WorldCom.

The Macro focus looks at the optimal structure and aligns the mission with these values. The Micro focus ensures that workers have a job worth doing, the right tools to do it, and are rewarded for doing it well.

While looking at the alignment of these three interrelated levels, we will also examine the internal company processes and the outputs that are created.

Figure 2: The Performance Model (Mega & Macro)

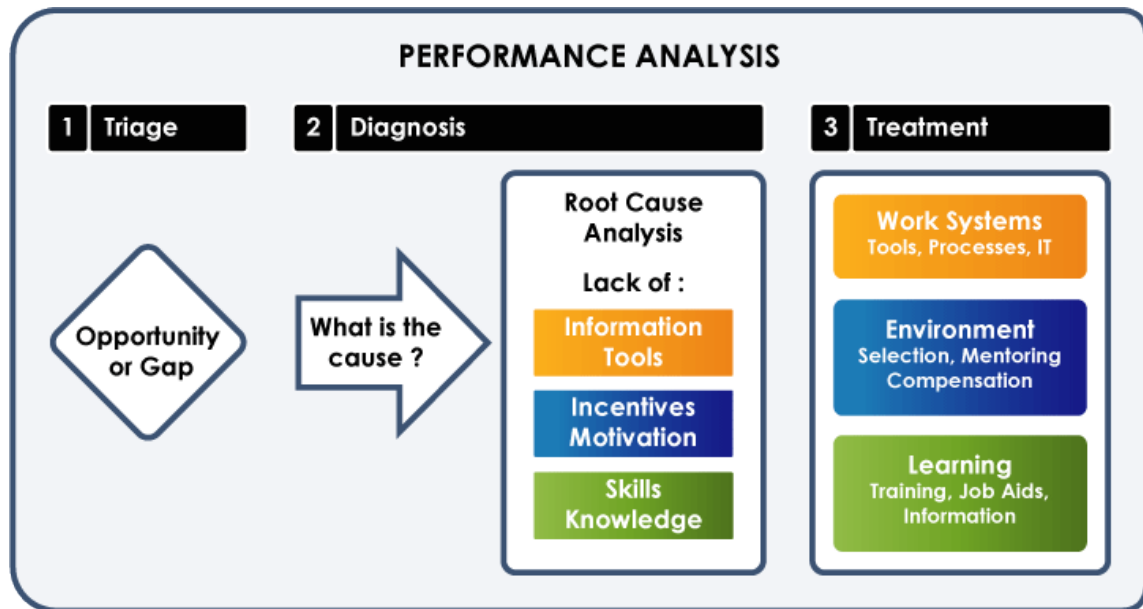


The reasons for beginning with a systemic approach, as shown in Figure 2, can be summed up in the words of Klaus Wittkuhn, a human performance practitioner in Germany:

“It is not an intelligent strategy to train people to overcome system deficiencies. Instead, we should design the system properly to make sure that the performers can leverage all their capabilities.”



Figure 3: Work Performance Analysis (Macro)



The Macro, or company level, looks at how work is performed within the context of the system model in Figure 2.

Generally speaking, we start by determining if there are gaps in general performance, such as employee turnover, or in an opportunity, such as growth and hiring. We then determine what the general causes or factors are in addressing the opportunity/gap and then look at what interventions (tools) are appropriate.

This process is elaborated on the next page.



Key Steps in the Conduct of the Performance Analysis:

Know the Business

Understand the client's business.
What are their objectives?
What are their challenges?
What do they value?

Define the Opportunity / Gap

Document the difference between optimal and actual.
What should happen?
What does happen?
How do you know?
Who wants it solved?

Clarify the Costs

Identify the price of the challenge / problem.
What is lost if nothing is done?
What is gained if we fix it?

Cause Analysis

Causes, Enablers and Obstacles
Question the assumptions and potential solutions.
What is causing the problem?
What will prevent a solution?
What will make a solution easier?

Focus on Key Sources

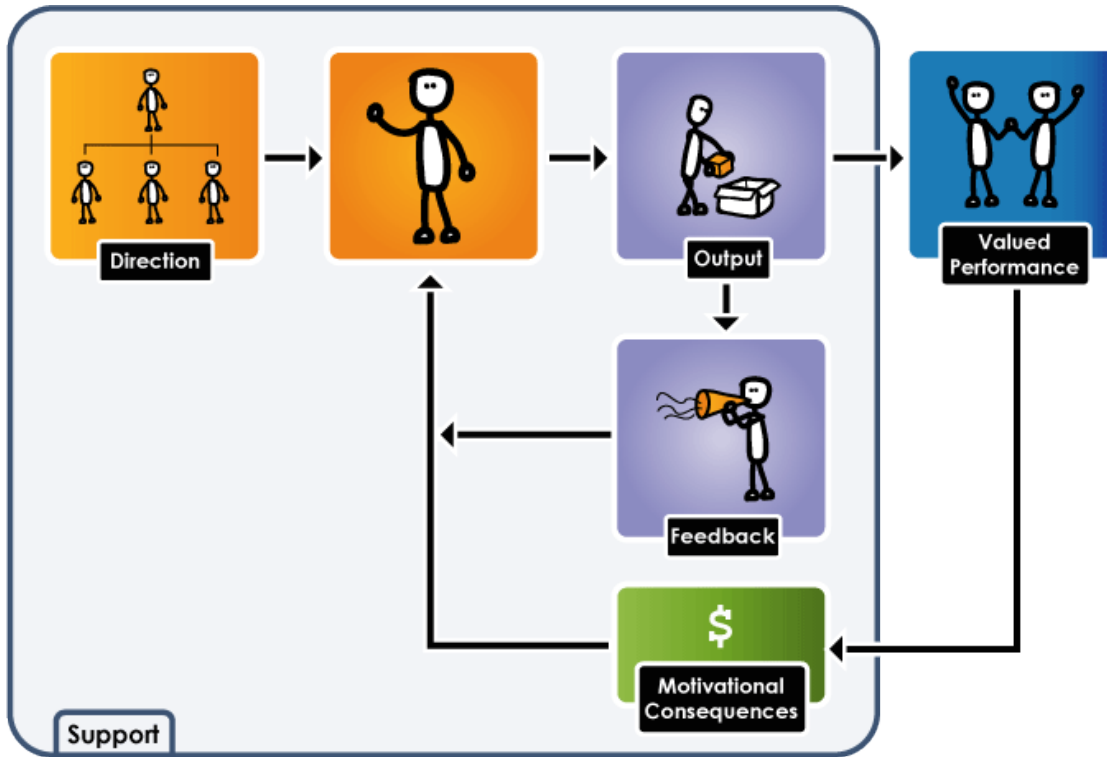
Find and focus on the people who are close to the problem and have perspective on the issues. We do not try and reach everyone – especially in an initial performance analysis.

Focus on Facts and Results

Look for data, through observations, records, experiences.
What evidence is there?
Is it consistent?
What does it tell us?
Is there more?



Figure 4: Job Performance at the Micro Level



Every worker performs within a **Support** system. This system includes some **Direction** and the worker creates some type of output – usually a product or a service. There is typically some internal **Feedback** on how well the job is done, from a supervisor or co-worker.

Outside of the company, the product or service is seen as **Valued Performance** by external customers. In an optimal system, the external clients level of satisfaction is fed back into the company, through **Motivational Consequences**, to the worker. One type of consequence could be a performance bonus.



Table 1: Cause Analysis Worksheet

Table 1 can be used to examine the enabling and restraining forces in the workplace. This factors can be examined against a reasonable performance goal, as determined at the macro level. An example Reasonable Goal could be “To Increase feedback and understanding of required job performance.” For each goal we would determine the Desired Level of Performance and the Present Level of Performance.

Factors	Driving Forces				Restraining Forces			
	+4	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3	-4
Information								
Clear Expectations								
Relevant Feedback								
Relevant Guides								
Performance Management								
Resources								
Materials & Tools								
Time								
Clear Processes & Procedures								
Safe, Organized Environment								
Incentives								
Financial								
Other incentives								
Enriched Jobs								
Positive Work Environment								
Motives								
Motives Aligned with Work								
Employees Desire to Perform								
Realistic Expectations								
Recruit, Select the Right People								
Capacity								
Capacity to Learn								
Capacity to do what is Needed								
Recruit, Select the Right People								
Emotional Limitations								
Knowledge & Skills								
Necessary Knowledge								
Necessary Skills								
Proper Placement								
Cross-trained								



Appendix

Potential Human Performance Interventions³

Intervention Type	Example
Instruction & Training (potential for informal learning)	Face-to-Face / Distance / Networked: Self-Paced Instruction Instructor-led Training Collaborative Learning Problem-based Learning
Information System Design (potential for informal learning)	EPSS Job Aids Expert Systems Intranet / Extranet Interactive Multimedia Online Information Prototyping Communities of Practice Knowledge Management Social Bookmarking
Communication Systems (potential for informal learning)	e-mail Voice mail IM Intranet / Extranet Meeting Planning Newsletters & Bulletins Document Design (Macros) Negotiation Systems
Career Development	Internal Recruitment Job Rotation Work Assignment Rotation Cross Training EEO Program Affirmative Action Diversity Programs Assessment Centres Mentoring Coaching Job Exchange Programs Tuition Reimbursement Scholarship Programs Experiential Learning Structured Practice

³ This list is provided for illustration purposes only. It shows the wide range of possible interventions.



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Intervention Type	Example
Human Development System Design	Health & Wellness Programs Networking Systems Tuition Reimbursement Scholarship Programs Support for Professional & Public Activities Literacy Programs Leadership development Programs
Documentation & Standards	Policies Procedures Guidelines Reference Manuals QA Documents By-Laws Articles of Incorporation Partnership Agreements Contracts, Letters of Intent, MOU
Ergonomic Design	Facilities Design Tools & Equipment WC Compliance Safety Planning
Feedback System Design	Identification of Performance Indicators Competency Models Performance Information Systems Client Feedback Systems
Management Science	Strategic Planning Goal Setting Visioning Supervision & Management Marketing Systems Public Relations Financial Systems Problem Solving Decision Making
Job & Work Flow Design	Work Flow Analysis Job Classification Work Scheduling Business Process Engineering



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Intervention Type	Example
Organisational Design & Development	Team Building Cultural Change Group Dynamics Change Management Value Clarification Conflict Management Organisational Rites
Quality Improvement	Quality Circles QA Programs Quality of Work-Life Programs Six Sigma
Resource System Design	FTE Allocation Plans Budgeting
Reward & Recognition System Design	Compensation Systems Merit Awards Measurement System Design Evaluation System Design Bonus Systems Motivational Programs Incentive & recognition Programs Benefit Programs Commission Systems
Selection System Design	Recruiting & Hiring Systems Succession Planning Leadership Development Programs
Measurement & Certification Programs	ISO CM-SCMM Test Design Psychometric Design

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