The Performance Problem Flowchart

Before getting into this analysis tool, we must first have a universal understanding of what we mean by "problem behavior" and how we determine whether we should do anything about it.

The easiest, most universally relevant question to ask when trying to determine if we have problem behavior in the work place is, **"DOES THAT BEHAVIOR IMPACT THEIR WORK OR SOMEONE ELSE'S?"**

If the answer is "yes," then you must find the cause of it. If the answer is, "No" or "Not sure," then take some time to think about it some more. *If their behavior just irritates you but does not affect their work, it may cause more trouble dealing with it than any gains from changing it.*

For example, suppose you are a manager who thinks there should be a lot of teamwork in the department and everyone should be very friendly with each other. You want your employees to eat lunch with each other and do other social things that would create a lot of interaction.

However, your highest-producing employee is a loner and not a participant in the department's socializing. Should you counsel with them about being more of a "team player" and making an effort to socialize more or leave them alone?

We suggest you ask yourself, *"Does their lack of socialization hurt theirs or anyone else's productivity?"* If it does (<u>and you could measure it if necessary so people will not think you are just harassing them</u>), you should use this flowchart to find out why they are not socializing.

However, if you cannot show how productivity is harmed, you would be better off by leaving them alone to be productive even if their behavior goes against your "team work" philosophy. You risk upsetting them so their production drops and they still may not want to socialize!

This flowchart will prove to you that 90% of the reasons for employee performance problems have their roots in systems controlled by management. Work your way through these ten steps and you will see what we mean.

Before you begin
Ask yourself, *"Is this issue worth pursuing?"*

Question: How do you know if it is worth pursuing?"

(If it interferes with work, it is worth pursuing!

If it is only a nuisance or aggravation, but does not interfere with work, it may be best to leave it alone.)

If so, go to STEP #1. If not, you are done!
Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is **"sufficiently solved."**

(This means it is not worth the time, effort, or expense to "fix it better".)

STEP #1
Ask yourself, *"Are my expectations clear?"*

Question: What do you ask your employee here?

(I want to make sure I did a good job of explaining. Please tell me what you think I expect you to do.)

If so, go on to the next step.

If not, what should you do?

STEP #2
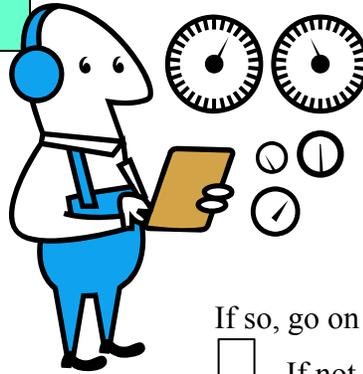Ask yourself, *"Are their resources adequate?"*

Question: What do you ask your employee here?

(Do you have everything you need to do what I expect?)

If so, go on to the next step.

If not, what should you do?

STEP #3
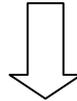Ask yourself, *"Do they get fast and frequent feedback on their performance?"*

Question: What do you ask your employee here?

(*How do you know how you are doing?*)

If so, go on to the next step.

If not, what should you do?

STEP #4

Ask yourself, *"Does the desired performance seem punishing?"*

(Hint: What do you usually do if they finish early and **others have not finished yet?)**

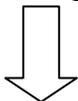**Question:** What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

(If their "reward" for finishing early is you give them the work the slower people have not finished, you will soon have <u>no one</u> finishing early.
You must praise the ones who finish early, let them know you documented their file that they finished ahead of the others, and ask if they will help the slower ones.

This way they do not feel that the slackers are getting away with anything)

If so, what should you do?

If not, go on to the next step.

STEP #5
Ask yourself, *"Is poor performance rewarded somehow?"*

(Hint: What do you usually do if **they have not finished yet** but others have?)
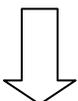
Question:
What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

(This is the opposite of above. If they are behind, let them know you documented their file that they were behind and you asked a faster worker to help pick up their slack.

This way, they realize they are not getting away with anything.)

If so, what should you do? If not, go on to the next step.

STEP #6
Ask yourself, *"Is there any penalty for not doing it right?"*

Question: What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

("Is there any penalty for not doing it right?" If there were no penalty, why would they stop doing it?)

If so, go on to the next step.

If not, what should you do?

STEP #7

Ask yourself, *"Is their non-performance a genuine skill deficiency?"*

Question:
What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

(Can they not do it or can they do it but just do not want to.)

If so, go on to the next step.

If not sure, what should you do?

Question:

Have they ever done this in the past?

(If so, give them practice to refresh their skills) If not, continue to the next step.

STEP #8
Ask yourself, *"Can the task be made easier?"*

Question:
What do you ask your employee here?

(Can you think of any easier way you can do this?)

If so, do it. If not, go to the next step.

STEP #9
Ask yourself, *"Are there any other obstacles that keep you from doing what we want?"*

Question:
What do you ask your employee here?

("Can you think of any thing keeping you from doing this?")

If so, what can you do?
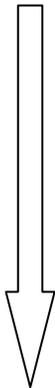
If not, go to the next step.

STEP #10

Ask yourself, *"Does the person have the desire to change?"*

Question: What do you ask your employee here?

(Do you have any plans to change your behavior?)

If so, go to the next step.

If not, REPLACE THEM!

Train them to the desired skill level!

Have you noticed that every step, except #10, is a factor controlled by management?

This means there is a 90% probability that an employee's performance problem is caused by something controlled by management!