Putting Performance First
ANALYSIS PHASE

PERFORMANCE-BASED TRAINING BEST PRACTICES

- Question stakeholders on the business case for training.

- Ask what the desired performance looks like: 1) be able to articulate the performance gap and desired results from your training perspective; and 2) deliberately link all proposed employee skill, knowledge, attitude (S/K/A) workplace behaviors to key business processes.

- Interview and observe exemplars to identify the desired state, rather than relying solely on input from subject matter experts.

- Identify potential obstacles to attaining the desired state.

- Identify the line of sight between business goals, key performance results, critical actions, and S/K/A.

- Become a better observer of the entire performance arena, not just the actual tasks the learner needs to perform to complete the job; understand the dynamic interaction of your training solution with the other elements of the organizational system; and realize that your training doesn't exist in a vacuum but is part of a larger system.

- Use good questioning skills when gathering data and information.

PERFORMANCE-BASED NON-TRAINING BEST PRACTICES

- Question stakeholders on the business case and/or pain points.

- Observe average performance to define the current state, not only for S/K/A deficiencies, but also for issues with the environment, incentives, data flow, equipment, employee abilities, and/or motivation.

- Document non-training performance findings in the analysis report and make recommendations for non-training solutions.

- Involve non-training managers, who control hiring, benefits, finances, business operations, quality control, engineering, management, and other functions relevant to the business, in your ISD efforts.

- Review performance measures already available in corporate documents like annual reports, audits, benchmarking, sales reports, error reports, etc.

- If your analysis shows the performance problem isn't just a S/K/A shortfall, propose doing a detailed cause analysis to pin down the root causes of the gap between the desired and existing performance.

- Define performance at all three levels — worker, work, and workplace — and design/develop the new S/K/A intervention to harmonize with all three; make sure to: 1) use financial, customer, internal business process, and learning and growth measures; and 2) include a mix of measures of past performance and targets/goals of initiatives that will drive future performance.

- Don't save evaluation until the last phase of the project — begin evaluation during problem or opportunity identification by: 1) collecting pre-performance data to use in comparison with post-performance data; 2) documenting performers' attitudes going into the intervention (positive or reluctant); 3) conducting pre-assessment of S/K/A to compare with post-learning scores; and 4) accurately documenting the desired impact on the organization to map against the actual impact.