re/Organizing a Department in 9 Steps

(and in only 10 Days)

The Language of Work Model

Danny Langdon
Kathleen Whiteside

Concept

Departments/Teams/Organizational Units can significantly improve their performance by utilizing a new approach to organization effectiveness—The Language of Work Model. It is possible to achieve increased operational clarity and organizational alignment to others inside and outside the business in 10 days using a nine-step process. Work execution, needs identification for performance improvement and re-organization of function can all be accomplished using a systematic process that looks at work from a behavioral perspective. Used in dozens of organizations during the last ten years, this method puts a methodology squarely in the hands of the manager—the person who is responsible for the smooth-functioning and profitability of the unit.

Methodology

The Language of Work model uses a nine-step process that can be completed by managers and their direct reports and employees.

The results are:
1. A Value Proposition.
2. A written Core Process map delineating WHAT and HOW the department achieves the Value Proposition; what should be measured to assess and identify needed performance improvements.
3. Identification of the job positions needed for the unit.
4. Job Models for all role/positions showing HOW individuals will perform their work and the skills/knowledge/attributes and competencies needed for employee selection, development, performance review and performance improvement interventions.
5. Identification of the organizational work support that is needed for people to get the work done.
6. The Work Load—the number of employees needed to achieve the Value Proposition
7. An organizational chart for facilitating the work
8. An organizational model (aligned to the processes and job models) that delineates how the group does its work together.
9. An implementation and change management plan to support the changes described in steps 1-8.

Methodology Description

Background

In the pressure to produce more with less, every manager explores a variety of fixes. Among the first of these is that often-used, complex, and heart-wrenching solution: the structural reorganization of a departments, unit or entire business to make them more effective. Perhaps the biggest fault of reorganizations is that they are not performance or process-centric. Because aspects of the business are not right (profit is off, customer complaints are increasing, performance efficiency/effectiveness is below standard, employee morale is low, or "something" is wrong), managers decide to reorganize. Reorganization is a primary choice because it appears expedient, easy to initiate, and understandable.   However, changing the organization chart may well be an exercise in arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic—it is immediate, simple enough to do, and "feels" effective. The problem is that reorganizing in this manner is both futile and backward. Also, on-going organizing process using a systemic methodology as will be delineated here could, for all practically purposes, avoid having to reorganize in times of crisis and uncertainty for employees.

This paper posits that until recently, most re-organizations have failed to meet their objectives in proper and useful methods for organizing and reorganizing departments. Research, reported here, proves this position. Secondly, the authors identify a number of goals for any reorganization and will by the end of the paper, answer how these goals are achieved by the methodology described. Thirdly, based on their extensive experience, they describe a method that speeds up the process, improves the ability of employees to get work done, links the work and the worker in a clear way, and reduces the amount of influence- peddling and lobbying used in changing the organization chart. Finally, the authors measure the method described against the goals listed.

Re-organization Goals

Ken Blanchard's definition of organization design paints a worthy picture to focus on: "Organizational design is about enabling a group of people to combine, coordinate, and control resources and activities in order to produce value, all in a way appropriate to the environment in which the business competes." (1993, Blanchard and Hersey).   Unfortunately, the most immediate impact of organizational re-design has been on employees and managers, and it has often been negative. The popular press is replete with articles on such topics as, "What you can do to beat pink-slip blues," (2003, Raghunathan) in The Dallas Morning News, and the internet is full of suggestions on "What to Do if You're Being Laid Off." (http://www.investsafe.com/ development/ advice.html). While not every reorganization results in a layoff, every reorganization includes some winners and some losers. Reducing payroll costs is one reason for conducting a re-organization. Others include increasing efficiency, absorbing merged or acquired entities, outsourcing, and management's desire for change.

During a re-organization, not only are jobs likely to change, be out-placed, or out-sourced, but jockeying for position occurs; new alliances are sought; and the mental challenge of change itself slows down almost everyone in the organization. It is not unusual to experience reorganization in eight out of ten years; indeed, at least one of the largest software manufacturers in the world expects departments to reorganize annually. Even if the re-organization does not involve a layoff, it would be hard to find a person in the corporate world who has not experienced at least one reorganization and therefore intimately knows the problems reorganizations create. Any approach that could be

devised to reduce the angst among and between employees and management would be welcome.

Robert Tomasko reports the following story in *Rethinking the Corporation*:

> A manager in a major New York bank became very cynical about the results of the bank's continual reductions of staff. … He felt that the post-downsizing atmosphere was one in which "instead of trying to get work done, people are constantly covering their ass." His biggest complaint was about how to deal with the concerns of his subordinates, in the face of the bank's uncertainties. "When someone asks you, 'What's my career path?' and you don't have one yourself, what do you say?" (1993, Tomasko).

Current Methodologies

Yet the methodology for conducting reorganizations has been slow and uncomfortable for all concerned. Even Best Practices about re-organizations are not very helpful in making this intervention successful. This report from MagneTek said,

> "… re-organized its manufacturing operations to allow associates more control of the work in their areas. Associates provided idea inputs during meetings with the manufacturing director, thereby providing a buy-in to the reorganization effort.

> This new organization has presented significant benefits in improved throughput, decreased material shortages, and an ability to respond to priorities in a timely manner. Communication between associates, Project Leaders, and the manufacturing manager is enhanced. (Best Practices, MagneTek).

However, the process description gives only the barest of guidance. "Associates provided idea inputs thereby providing a buy-in to the reorganization effort." Other examples that we have experienced or gleaned from research (UCSD Reorganization Report, 2003) have shown that the main process is to begin by sharing assumptions, perhaps goals, and even articles and best practices, which now tend to point to the value of creating "flat" organizations. Then there is a process of sharing various re-drawings of the current organization chart. Vigorous discussion follows, which might include some attempts to meet customer needs, but often focuses on who is going to get what (responsibility, promotion, etc.). Back room politicking and persuasion are the order of the day. Finally, a new chart is agreed upon, and implementation begins.
Few reorganizations really meet the desired expectations; because they are generally disruptive to all concerned, reorganizations are often viewed as a waste of time and source of discontent in the organization. Mourier and Smith found 2 studies of a "Restructure of Organizational Units," with a median success rate of 25%. In their own work, they have identified 49 such projects, with a 10% success rate. Reorganizations are a dreaded intervention, but conducted repeatedly. Given the shrinking of the US economy, they are probably critical to success in the post-Iraqi war economy.

A New Methodology

Since there have been, to date, few systematic processes for re-organizing departments or businesses, the following description of an innovative, performance-centric approach will enhance the practice of internal and external consultants. This method is based on a definition of performance included in The New Language of Work model, and explicated in *Aligning Performance: Improving People, Systems, and Organizations*." (Langdon, 2000). This method takes into account the principles of good organization design (See bibliography for resources), while acknowledging that high performance organizations need to be designed to accomplish work. While other specialists in organization design describe the consequences of their process

(i.e. organized to enhance motivation, a "flat organization" to push decision-making to the floor level, etc.), methodology descriptions have generally referenced only the importance of "employee involvement." We have heard anecdotally that executives have translated that admonition into a charge to managers to, "Go work it out among yourselves. Come back to me with an organization chart that works!" Alternatively, OD consultants will facilitate the process, but again follow no generally-accepted methodology. Absent a performance-based track to run on, months have been spent debating alternatives, or overcoming the debilitating arguments for more power for certain parties.

As external consultants, we have focused our practice on improving the process of describing work at the individual level and in reorganizations. For the latter, we have developed a methodology for creating job models, which are deliverable-centered job descriptions. They are operational in nature, designed not to solve an HR problem (which they can and do), but to provide a performance-enhancing tool to the worker and his/her management. This work is described elsewhere. It was a natural evolutionary step to go to the design and/or redesign of whole organizations to achieve overall organizational alignment (between business unit, core processes, jobs, and work groups). Having found a way to define as-is and to-be jobs, including skills/knowledge/attributes required, in fewer than 4 hours per job, it was logical for clients to request that we develop a way to reorganize, or simply organize, their departments. The following is a summary of several reorganizations and organizing of departments (and entire business units) we have conducted in the last five years. Note that we are concentrating here on reorganization of departments (work groups, including teams), but the methodology equally applies to entire companies/divisions/mission systems.

Special Author Note: When the number of employees is 100 or fewer, a typical reorganization can be accomplished in ten working days. Most organizations of 100 or less have about 10-15 actually job differences. If the unit has more employees, more time is needed, but that is generally necessitated by development of additional job models for a larger number of jobs needed. The same 10-step process is used and the reorganization is nonetheless speedy.

Meeting the Need: Questions to Answer

This innovative 9-Step process described here meets the basic needs of re-organization by answering the following questions:

1. "Is it possible to develop a track to run on so that the organization can meet its goals, whatever they are, regardless of industry or complexity?"
2. "Can employees be involved without causing politicking to interfere with the participation goal?"
3. "Can the time spent reorganizing be reduced substantially, thereby reducing the anxiety of the unknown for employees?"
4. "Will reorganizations, conducted this way, improve performance?" and finally,
5. "Can HR play a strategic role with the organization to improve work execution and continually improve work effectiveness and efficiency through employee selection, assessment, development, and change in an integrated manner?"

The answers to these questions/goals will be given at the end of this article once the overall process is detailed.

9 Phases of the Re/Organization Process
Based on the Language of Work model

Step 1: Define your Department's Value Proposition
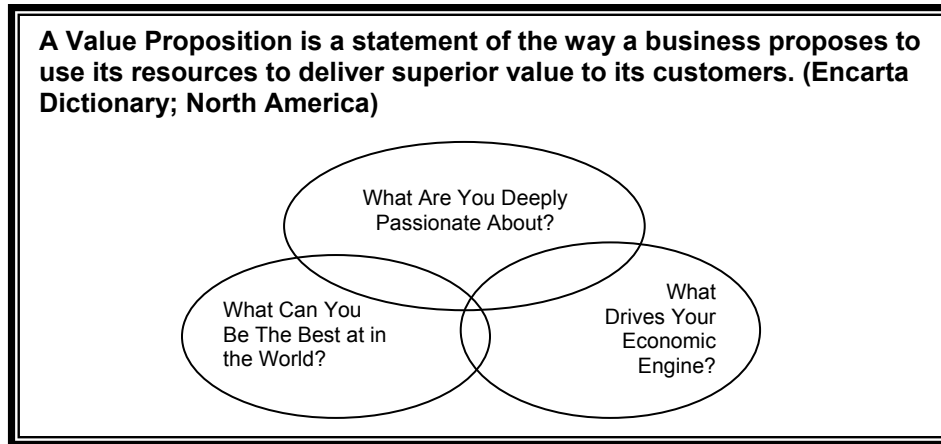
The management team meets with two facilitators to become oriented to the reorganization's goals and the process to be used.   Prior to this meeting, the consultants/facilitators have reviewed the literature, searched the Internet and other sources for best practices for the particular industry. The management team was also assigned the task of identifying best practices in advance of the first day's meeting. A brief review, summarization, and prioritization of these Best Practices is necessary for the first group activity of defining the group's value proposition.

The first step is to define the unit's "Value Proposition." Most companies have defined a Vision/Mission statement, which has trickled down to various departments which, in turn, have developed their own vision and mission statements. These are generally statements of overall intent, but do not specify the "value" that each department provides its company and clients. Understanding the value helps develop a common understanding that truly guides all members of the team. Jim Collins, author of **Good to Great** (2002) has articulated a useful process for defining a value proposition. The value proposition is the intersection of the answer to three critical questions:

- What are we passionate about?
- What are we "best" at?
- What drives our economic engine?

Having each member of the management team answer these three questions individually, then compiling the answers and eliminating duplicates and honing the language until it is crystal clear to all parties, develops a really useful value proposition. The value proposition provides the direction and ultimately the "bar" against which the re/organization can be assessed.

Timing for Step 1: It generally takes half a day to review the department in general, review best practices, and define the Value Proposition.

A Value Proposition is a statement of the way a business proposes to use its resources to deliver superior value to its customers. (Encarta Dictionary; North America)

What Are You Deeply Passionate About?

What Can You Be The Best at in the World?

What Drives Your Economic Engine?

Sample Value Proposition Statement:

Provide the appropriate robust technology solutions and support services at best cost to DWR employees so that the water resources of California can benefit the State's people, and that natural and human environments can be protected, restored, and enhanced.

Figure 1

Steps 2 and 3: Define Core Processes & Name Jobs Needed

Define Core Processes

Having defined its goals by building a Value Proposition, the team next defines what is known as the Core Processes Model. A Core Process Model represents HOW the group currently (and in the future) will achieve its Value Proposition. Development of a Core Process Model is tough, but critical, work for management.

A Core Processes Model is an operational way to define the current (AS IS) department, as well as the future (TO BE) department, in terms of the outputs and consequences it is intended to achieve in actualizing its Value Proposition. Then the inputs, conditions, process steps, and feedback are linked to the outputs and consequences that will make this happen. This "work" or "performance" model is defined using what is known as the Language of Work model (Langdon, 1995, 2000). This is a state-of-the-art way of reflecting operationally how things will be done as the work of the department. As shown in Figure 2, the Language of Work model uses six interrelated and systemic elements to define work.

The Language of Work Model

A Model For Defining, Aligning, Talking, Facilitating Improving, Thinking, Measuring and Changing Performance

Conditions

Inputs → **Process Steps** → **Outputs** → **Consequences**

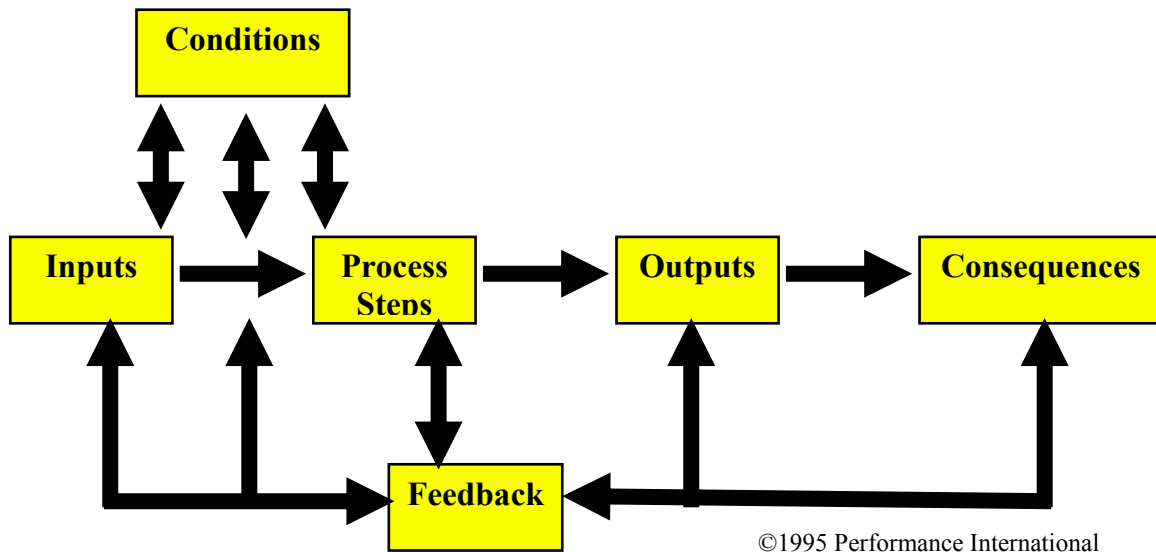**Feedback**

©1995 Performance International

Figure 2

The management team first defines an AS-IS state of the department that provides a consensus-driven picture of how things are presently accomplished. Unless there is total satisfaction with things as they are, a TO-BE Core Process Model will be developed next. New outputs (and their related five elements) that are deemed necessary (i.e., from best practices, new directional input from management, employee input, etc.), are added to the Core Processes Model to reflect how the TO-BE model will reflect the value proposition. The TO-BE Core Processes Model establishes the direction for all subsequent steps in the reorganization of the department.

For each major output of the Core Process Model, a set of specific process steps is defined outlining *how* each output will be achieved. In Figure 3, an output of the work group was the Solving Problems/Providing Solutions. Consensus in the processes will assure that each manager understands the other managers' methods of achieving results, the needs and points of intersection (and perhaps overlap), and the cooperation needed to achieve common goals in timely and effective ways. Managers are further shown how, as Rummler and Brache (1990) suggest, "to manage their white spaces"—that is, managing the places "no one is seemingly responsible for managing."

It is here that critical measurements, the standards and performance questions that must be answered, can be identified. Notice that cooperation is being built into the maps and models which lead to a lack of "horse-trading" and politics while developing the best way to achieve the Core Processes. Indeed, politicking at this point is so out of place that in our experience it is both comical and futile. This is the critical aspect of a performance-based reorganization exercise: politicking, bias and opinion are virtually eliminated as the determinants of the final structure. Instead, a common picture of performance (**how** the work will be done), linked directly to the

work direction (**what**) of the departments' value proposition (and hopefully the overall entire Business Unit for the larger organization, if defined—see Langdon, 2000) becomes the *leitmotif* of all the thinking.
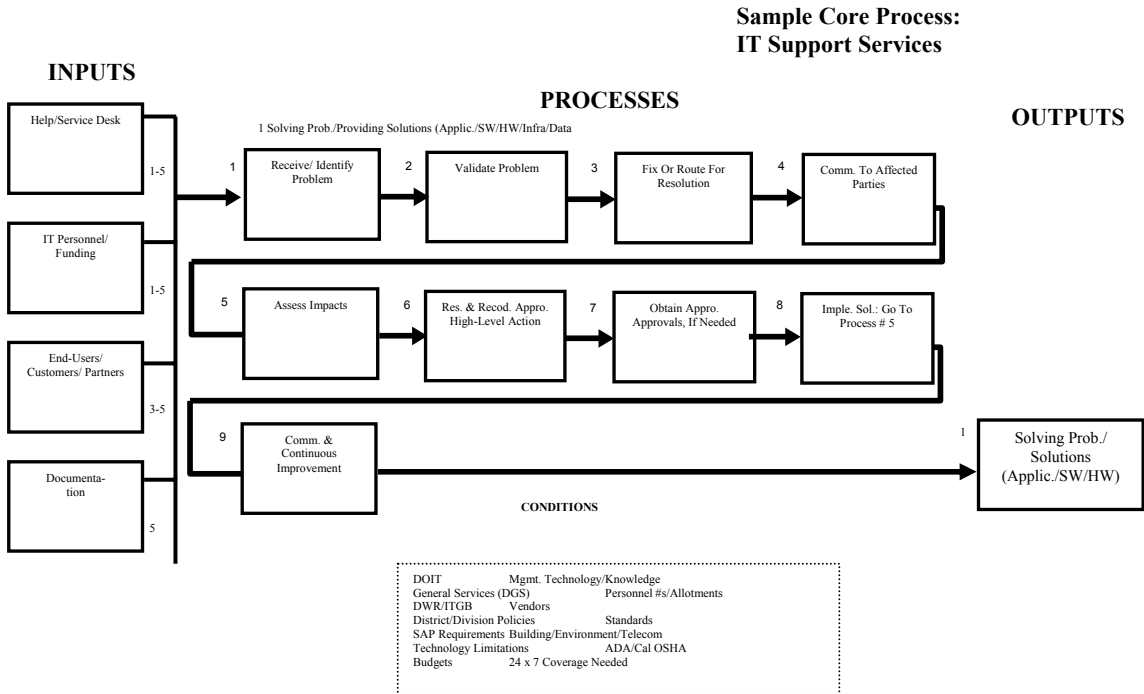
Sample Core Process:
IT Support Services

INPUTS

PROCESSES

OUTPUTS

Help/Service Desk	
	1-5
IT Personnel/ Funding	
	1-5
End-Users/ Customers/ Partners	
	3-5
Documenta- tion	
	5

1 Solving Prob./Providing Solutions (Applic./SW/HW/Infra/Data

1 — Receive/ Identify Problem

2 — Validate Problem

3 — Fix Or Route For Resolution

4 — Comm. To Affected Parties

5 — Assess Impacts

6 — Res. & Recod. Appro. High-Level Action

7 — Obtain Appro. Approvals, If Needed

8 — Imple. Sol.: Go To Process # 5

9 — Comm. & Continuous Improvement

1 — Solving Prob./ Solutions (Applic./SW/HW)

CONDITIONS

```
DOIT                  Mgmt. Technology/Knowledge
General Services (DGS)          Personnel #s/Allotments
DWR/ITGB        Vendors
District/Division Policies           Standards
SAP Requirements  Building/Environment/Telecom
Technology Limitations              ADA/Cal OSHA
Budgets            24 x 7 Coverage Needed
```

Note:
Consequences, Feedback and other processes on other pages not illustrated here.

Figure 3

Name The Jobs

The steps described so far have been practiced, in one form or another, in many Business Process mapping methodologies. The innovation at this point is the identification of the jobs needed to execute those Core Processes. Here, we identify which jobs or positions are needed to complete each step of each process. The question is posed at each process step, "Who does this work?" These answers are color-coded, creating for the first time a picture of who does the work. Having the same six-step performance paradigm for doing each step of analysis keeps naming the jobs relatively simple…and quick. It is also the key to developing a performance-centric organization. Naming these jobs well is critical: we are not so much interested in the current jobs and their duties, but rather need to know what kinds of jobs *should* exist in order to achieve the desired output and consequences well. Current jobs can be kept in mind; however, their presence should not drive team thinking.

An innovative use of analogies is very effective for naming the jobs that are needed. For example, "How is database marketing like planning a party?" or "How is a corporate security group like a MASH unit?" or "How is running a training department like running a school?" The answers reveal job titles that fall outside the corporate structures that either are too precise or too vague to be useful. This approach provides "generic" names for jobs, such as "invitation-maker", "triage nurse", or "facilities manager". This neutral process clears away any status or emotional attachment to non-useful names, such as Associate Bookkeeper or the ubiquitous Program Manager. In one organization of 180 people, 120 different job names were reduced to 25

different functions. Too many job titles, given out indiscriminately (or too few, providing no appropriate discriminators) are both problems that can be eliminated by the reorganization methodology suggested here.

Naming the jobs in this way takes relatively little time. The names are linked to specific aspects of the Core Process, providing at the same time accurate data for revamping the new work of existing staff and management. Loading of jobs, or determining how many people are needed for each job, is also begun at this point, but finished in a later time. Job naming should also prepare for the addition or elimination of job positions. (Interestingly enough, this exercise has prevented several "downsizings" because executives saw in clear detail how much work was involved in meeting the Core Process needs of the department.) Since this naming and loading is done without regard to the individuals currently available, the process provides more objectivity in reviewing work and manpower needs. In later steps current staff needs are considered, including preparing them for doing work differently, additional training, or other performance improvement measures.
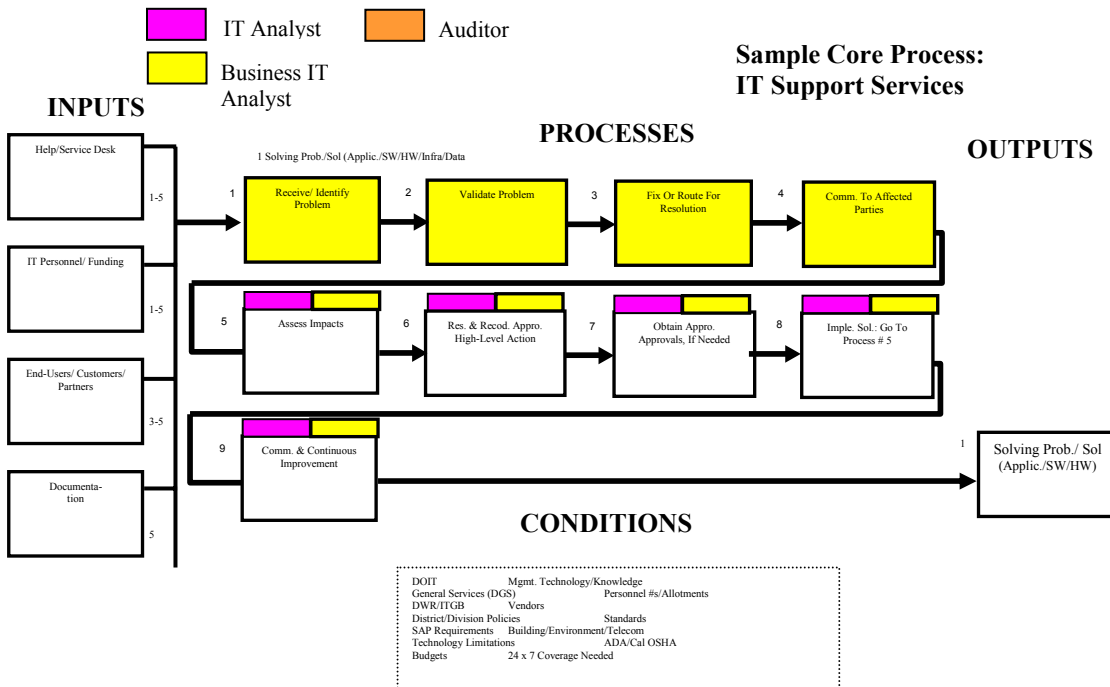

Figure 4

Note:
Consequences, Feedback and other processes on other pages not illustrated here.

Timing For Step 2 and 3: Developing the typical AS-IS and TO-BE core process models, and naming the jobs to the TO-BE state, takes approximately one to two days. Completing the models identifies discrepancies in consensus or knowledge, and brings out any misconceptions about the work and management of it in very un-emotional terms. Through the construction of a performance-centric graphic, the management team has defined the organization, its functions, and the beginning of its future state as well. In addition, the facilitators have developed a deep understanding, very quickly, of the client's work world and needs. The model reveals a systems view of the client's world. Keeping additional discussions systematic is much easier because of this foundation.

Step 4: Model Each Job

Many reorganization processes stop before naming and defining jobs. However, stopping here is not appropriate for two reasons. One is that developing the best organizational/ management structure requires specific information about what kinds of jobs are needed and detailed knowledge of these jobs. Secondly, implementation of the new organizational structure and effective change management require knowledge of the specific expectations of each job by those who will be filling the job positions. Also, knowing the specifics of job performance will be essential for selecting or re-assigning employees or improving the performance of current employees.   If there is anything that can subvert a re-organization, it is the uncertainty of individual workers about their role in the new organization. In addition, to meet the best practice of involving participation, incumbents need to create models of the jobs. This process is called job modeling. It uses the same performance paradigm that was used in Core Process modeling. Job modeling is needed to achieve alignment of work to the Value Proposition and specifically to the Core Processes—in other words, the "What" of the Value Proposition is aligned the "How" of Core Processes, which are in turn aligned to the "Who" of the Job Models.

Modeling jobs turns out to be a very efficient, dynamic, self-fulfilling, and enlightening process. Even done without the previous 3 steps, job modeling can be a very useful activity for existing staff, because it clarifies their work, giving them language to discuss and change current frustrations. By involving employees affected by change in the definition of those changes, through a job model, one can insure their commitment to the restructuring. Traditional restructuring suffers largely because it is done by senior management and foisted upon the unsuspecting work force. In the Language of Work process, the staff is involved in the restructuring process primarily through the job modeling, but also by input at other (i.e., core process, culture assessment) stages. In addition, managers explain the principles of the process they are going through, share Core Process maps, and explain the use of generic job titles (such as triage nurse) at the beginning of each job modeling session. Those invited to Job Modeling sessions are often exemplary performers, and are often informal opinion leaders as well, who can effectively start the grape vine going—in a positive direction.

The job modeling process requires 3-5 persons for each position/role. Their only preparation is to bring their experience as exemplary performers and the skill and knowledge required to do the work. An orientation to modeling is provided as was in the overview before defining the Core Process models. If job grade changes are needed, the HR function is given the newly-developed job models, allowing them to understand the new jobs quickly, compare them to former job descriptions, obtain any additional information and return a job grade in record time. HR departments have generally greeted the development of job models as an asset to them. Managers accept them because they clarify the work for individuals, make it easier to select new employees, provide a better mechanism for performance review, and how to develop and improve employee (competency and) performance.

Timing for Step 4: **Job Modeling takes about 4-hours for each job. Another 4 hours outside the setting may be needed to "clean" things up, incorporating feedback and formatting.**

CONDITIONS

Job Model:
Business Analyst

Federal/State/Local Laws & Regs.
Budget
Best Business Practices
Union Contracts
others

INPUTS

PROCESSES

2 Developing Business Case Justification

DWR Bus. Needs/
Problems

Other
Inputs

| | 1 | Review Problem/ Background Information | 2 | Analyze Current System | 3 | Conduct Alternative Analysis | 4 | Perform Cost/Benefit Analysis |

OUTPUTS

| 5 | Select Best Alternative(s) | 6 | Conduct Risk Assessment | 7 | Formulate Project Plan | 8 | Submit To Appropriate Entity | 2 | Business Case Justification Built |

FEEDBACK

1.   System Tools
2.   Control Agencies
3.   User/Clients
others

CONSEQUENCES

1.   Contributing to viability of DWR (outputs 1-8)
2.   Integrated system (outputs 1-8)
3.   Satisfied customers
others

Note:
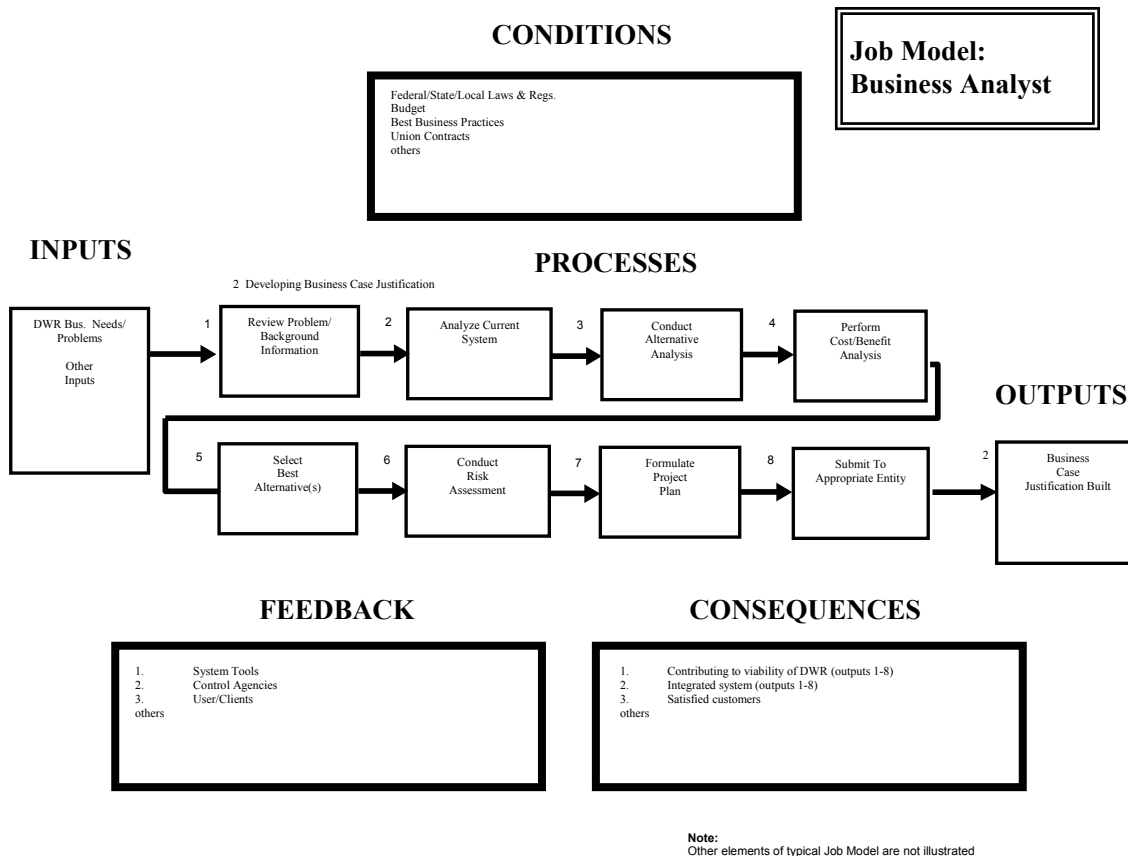Other elements of typical Job Model are not illustrated

Figure 5

Step 5: Collect Culture (Work Support) Data

The defined core process model and job models specify how and by whom the work is to be done in order to achieve the value proposition. But other subsystems that support these must also be attended to, put into place or improved upon because they truly influence getting the work done. As Geary Rummler (1990) has noted below, ". . . if you pit a good performer against a bad system, the system will win almost every time."   In no similar and small way, the lack of cultural support, like processes, can make work simply unbearable.

> Processes don't do work, people do. Look closely at the inner workings of any company and you'll discover gaps between official work processes -- the "ideal" flows of tasks and procedures -- and the real-world practices behind how things actually get done. These gaps are not problems that need fixing; they're opportunities that deserve leveraging…We're not arguing against business processes per se. The challenge is to keep them elegantly minimal -- to under prescribe formal procedures and create "elbow room" for local interpretations and innovations. It's a point that off-the-shelf reengineering misses: you can't build processes without the practices to implement them -- and the most effective practices grow from the grassroots. (Brown and Solomon, 1995) .

Another name for this informal subsystem is the culture that exists in all organizations that supports or hinders the work that is to be done. Langdon (2000) aptly identified this as "work support"—the support provided by the organization so that individuals and groups can

accomplish their work imbedded in core processes and their job model. Therefore, in reorganizing the work, the culture must be attended to.

The information for the culture can be collected and identified while doing the process and job model definition described above. Workers and managers are asked, as the core processes and jobs are being defined, "What exists that gets in the way of doing work?" and, "What needs to be added to help get the work done better?"   Such data when graphically arranged , according to where and how it impacts inputs, conditions, process steps, and feedback, becomes a powerful tool in communicating employees' needs for organizational support to management for establishing, maintaining, or improving. It also helps to reinforce what management is already currently doing well, so they will continue doing it even during the changes that are imminent. You can view the details of how to graphically depict work support in Langdon's book on "Aligning Performance."

A second method of cultural assessment often used in reorganization is the organizational scan. The reader is referred to existing resources (Lineberry & Carleton, 2004) that best describe the organizational scan methodology.

Timing for Step 5: Since this is done concurrently with the previous three steps, only an hour per job or core process is needed to collect the data, and perhaps half a day to compile the data depending on the amount collected.

Step 6: Load the Work

Step 6 is spent on the task of loading the work. This means determining how many people will be needed for each job position. Managers and existing staff are generally quite capable of making these projections provided they have an accurate picture of the inputs, process steps needed to accomplish the outputs and consequences of the Core Process and job models. Experience has shown that the total number of existing staff is often maintained from such reorganizations, while greater output can be achieved. If a staff reduction is needed, it can easily be accommodated by building a realistic picture of how much work can be achieved from a reduced staffing level.

Timing for Step 6: About half a day or less.

Step 7: Identify Organization Structure

Step 7 is when the all-important, seemingly elusive goal of defining the organization structure (hierarchy) is finally achieved. It may seem counter-intuitive in Western cultures to wait so long for the new organization chart. Since many executives tend to doodle organizational structures, and naturally review the implications for their direct reports, waiting until the work is defined requires discipline, and coaching on the part of the facilitators. During process and job modeling, the executive often twists nervously   while wanting a new organization structure. But the value of waiting is revealed: learnings about the group and the work, as well as a structure that makes sense, emerge. This is made possible through the clarity of information that emerged through process and job modeling, loading the work, and cultural issues.

At this stage of the process, the organizational structure practically reveals itself. It may need to be prompted by some criteria that the management team needs to prioritize, and drafts of possible options. But the clarity of all the information identified and definition work that preceded this day cause a picture to emerge of the best way to get the work done. It should not be surprising that

the new structure is often quite different from the current structure. This is because existing structures grow like cow paths, (rather than through engineered and planned traffic-bearing roads), from management's best guesses and historical experience. As goals are added, talented staff is found, or management needs emerge, new reporting structures are developed. Eventually, an unworkable hodge-podge develops. What is needed, however, is a structure built on getting the work done to achieve the Value Proposition. Knowing WHAT is to be achieved, HOW it will be achieved, and by WHOM the work will be done, within a desirable cultural context, is the information needed to determine reporting relationships for a given department effectively and efficiently.

By providing the management team with a track to run on, they have the data needed to create an organizational structure that will get the work done.

Timing for Step 7: About half a day.

Step 8: Define the Work Groups

Sometimes the emerging department has sub-units of work organized around functions. For example, an IT function has subsets of workers organized to Provide End-User Support, Support Enterprise-wide software, LAN Administration, and so on. It is useful to define each of these subsets into a performance model that shows how the individuals within it will function together as a unit. These are also called work group models. They are built from core processes, and can be done relatively quickly by dividing and linking the related core processes. This work is done with the individuals from each department through the effort of the facilitators. Consensus is thus reached not only on what each individual will do (using Job Models), but that same level of consensus can be achieved by using Work Group Models that can be shared with other work groups. Thus, there is a performance alignment that is consistent from Core Process Models to Job Models to Work Group Models (and would, as Langdon suggests, have also been from a larger business entity known as the Business Unit Model).

Timing for Step 8: About a day or less.

Step 9: Develop a Roll-out Plan

The last day is spent defining a rollout or implementation and communication plan for the reorganization. Of course, some of this has already been achieved through Days 1 through 8. But some activities will take longer to achieve and require careful planning. The information for the roll-out plan naturally comes from the previous definition work and realization of what it takes, for example, to select the appropriate individuals to fulfill various jobs, what culture issues need to be addresses, etc. The facilitators gather the change management needs, help prioritize them, and provide assistance in how each can be implemented.   A plan of events, dates, and responsibility is formulated and agreed upon.

Timing For Step 9: About a day.

Methodology Summary and Results

We began this paper by stating five needs to be met in the form of questions.

Q. 1: "Is it possible to develop a track to run on so that the organization can meet its goals, whatever they are, regardless of industry or complexity?"

The answer is "yes," assuming that one has, or is willing to follow, a systematic process.

We have used this method with several organizations over the past 10 years. This table shows the industry, the relative complexity of the organization, and the number of employees. In every case, the management team was able to follow the steps outlined above and to achieve their reorganization goals.

Complexity and Industry Chart

Industry	Unit	Complexity	# of employees
Utility	IT	Hi	250
Hi tech	Corporate Security	Hi	24
Insurance Company	Group Credit Insurance	Med	80
Hi tech	Sales Training	Med	22
Non Profit	Nursing Services	Lo	25
Non Profit	Health Center	Med	48
Non Profit	Justice Center	Lo	4

Figure 6

The systematic process includes beginning with the development of a value proposition for the unit, then identifying the core processes needed to meet the value proposition, determining and modeling the **jobs** that are needed, developing the **supporting culture, loading the work** and developing the reporting and organizational relationships needed to accomplish the value proposition. It's a win-win approach, while accomplishing some of the change management while completing the definition process with a great of understanding and commitment by both management and employees being involved.

Q. 2: "Can employees be involved without causing politicking to interfere with the participation goal?"

Employees are involved because they complete the job models and organization scan, which means that they define the work and obstacles in the culture that interfere with their ability to get the work done. They have opportunities to raise questions about the core process maps with their managers. They also define, at the operational level, the jobs that will be filled to complete the work of the core processes. In addition, the following table shows the instances of politicking, which we define as lobbying for a position of greater stature, pay or importance than the work warrants, in seven reorganizations:

Politicking Chart

Industry	Unit	Instances of Politicking	Sources	Resolution
Utility	IT	2	Engineer who did technician's work; Manager who wanted to protect staff from change	Review of work showed no support for first position; manager was cajoled by peers into accepting new chart
Hi tech	Corporate Security	0	N/A	N/A
Insurance Company	Group Credit Insurance	1	Accounting wanted to keep their past prestige	Review of work showed no need for large accounting staff
Hi tech	Sales Training	0	N/A	N/A
Non Profit	Home Nursing Services	0	N/A	N/A
Non Profit	Health Center	0	N/A	N/A
Non Profit	Justice Center	0	N/A	N/A

Figure 7

Q. 3: "Can the time spent reorganizing as presently practiced be reduced substantially, thereby reducing the anxiety of the unknown for employees?"

In our experience, having a systematic process that does not begin with an opinion survey of employees, but which rather begins with the Value Proposition and a mapping of the work which the organization is supposed to accomplish, is a great step forward in reducing the time a

reorganization takes. Being performance-centric, that is focusing getting the work done, allows for the other desirable goals of reorganizations, such as customer-orientation and motivation of employees, as well as efficiency and administrative support. One is always working, as it were, towards an understanding and best solution for the organization. Granting that the use of consultant time is only one measure of the speed of the reorganization, it recognizes the speed with which such assignment can be done. It is management's responsibility to move forward quickly as well.

Industry	Unit	Size of unit	# of working days to complete*
Utility	IT	250	40 (Note the same process was used as described above, but given the number of employees to be reorganized, the length of time was extended)
Hi tech	Corporate Security	24 employees	10
Insurance Company	Group Credit Insurance	80	10 (work done by internal staff = 60)
Hi tech	Sales Training	22	5
Non Profit	Home Nursing Services	25	4
Non Profit	Health Center	48	4
Non Profit	Justice Center	4	4

Note: In this work, we use 2 consultants at all times. This allows for simultaneous collection of data and entry of data into the computer database, ensures adherence to the model, and provides the team to reflect both big and precise-picture thinking, warm and tough mien for facilitation, and a trusted colleague to analyze trouble spots and potential barriers to completion.

Figure 8

Q.4 Will re/organizing improve performance?

Employees have consistently told us that now they understand the work better and how the structure can aid in doing the work; that the structure finally eliminates barriers instead of creating them, and provides for greater ease in getting work done. Management reports an enhanced ability to focus on the real goals of the job, once the cumbersome structure is eliminated. Management also knows what to focus on in improving the overall culture. A performance-centric redesign eliminates duplication.

Key among the results produced is the knowledge of what to measure; both as the goals (outputs and consequences to value proposition), and how and what to change (inputs, conditions, process steps, and feedback and related work performance influences, such as skills/knowledge/attributes/work support) to make things better. Measurement has moved from

brainstorming to a scientific and systematic identification of what to measure for both cause and effect.

The following chart provides comments provided to us regarding the effectiveness of the re-organizations that have been conducted using this methodology:

Perceived Benefit of Methodology

Department	Size of unit	Perceived benefits of performance-centric reorganization
Corporate Security	24 employees	Managers reported increased ability to manage, because the processes were now visible and in place. Reported that the responsibility and accountability needed was put into place. General Manager was able to include a customer-focus that had been missing. Employees indicated a need for change, which this offered.
Justice Center	4	Ability of Board of Directors to see and understand staff work that needed to be done; identification of overload of one job; Board received information on needs to improve its own performance; ability to retain Executive Director enhanced. Recruitment to replace successful Executive Director made easier.
Insurance Company	80	Immediate savings in excess of $1m due to core process maps being drawn; antiquated, non-profitable processes streamlined; final implementation prohibited because senior executives decided not to offer the product.
Sales Training	22	Scores in organization health index went up; efficiency was reported to be up.
Utility	250	Employees reported greater clarity of roles and interface; supported departments reported improved service and greater efficiency in use of IT services. Implementation is still on-going.

Figure 9

Q.5 Can HR truly become a strategic partner with line managers?

The answer is yes, but not accomplished as one might expect.

Organizations have one thing in mind and if HR doesn't link itself to this goal, they will always be viewed as either a necessary evil or just one of those support requirements. Organizations

(i.e., engineering, manufacturing, sales, etc., etc.) have to **execute** **work** to meet goals. If anyone can help them to understand and execute work better, they will love you forever. The heart and soul of the methodology suggested here is exactly the emphasis on understanding and improving work execution—processes and jobs and organizational structure, plus culture support. When HR uses this Language of Work model of performance to define and implement initiatives that further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of work execution, they become valued. For example, not only can HR be valued for using the process on re/organizing departments, but they can use the same model to select better employees using job models and attributes. They can use the model to help managers do more effective performance reviews. And they can improve daily performance and careers of employees. Perhaps of greatest significance is that the methodology puts the leadership role for department improvement on the shoulders of the manager, rather than HR providing the leadership to development. HR becomes, as it should be, the support agency to manager and employee effectiveness in work execution.

Methodology Conclusions

A systematic, performance-centric reorganization can be planned and executed in a timely and effective manner. Typically, ten days of client work (using two consultants) through a nine-step process, spread over two or more weeks, can develop a new, effective and more efficient organization that aligns the work: the processes, individuals and the work groups with their Value Proposition. Uncertainty and casual "cow paths" of procedures have been replaced by a systematic approach to organization.

Departments and companies that have employed this methodology have remarked on its speed, clarity, ease and utility. Employees have been delighted to participate in what has otherwise been often thought of as a back-room, highly political activity. Even when jobs have been eliminated during this process, feedback has been positive because of the information provided. It is possible to deal with jobs unemotionally, but to treat the incumbents with human dignity. An old, ill-used and not very useful intervention has been replaced with a new, performance-centric approach.

——

References

Best Practices Survey, "Project Organizational Structure: MagneTek Defense Systems" (Power Paragon, Inc.). (08/15/1991, Revision Date: 12/17/1999).   Retrieved from http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/ppinc/ppinc_7.html

Blanchard, Kenneth H. and Hersey, Paul. (1993). *Management of Organizational Behavior*, (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs: NJ: Prentice-Hall, 3-11.

Brown, John Seely and Solomon, Estee. (1995, November) Fast Company, p.78.

Collins, Jim. (2001). *Good to great*. NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Gonyea, James C. (2003). *What to do if you are laid off*. Retrieved May 25, 2003 from http://www.investsafe.com/development/advice.html

Langdon, Danny G. (2000). *Aligning performance: improving people, systems and organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pheiffer Publishers.

Langdon, Danny G. (1995). The new language of work. Amherst, MA.: HRD Press.

Lineberry, Claude and Carleton, Robert. (2004). Achieving post-merger profitability: A stakeholder's guide to cultural due diligence, assessment, and integration. NY: Pfeiffer & Co.

Mourier, Pierre and Smith, (2001) Conquering Organizational Change. Atlanta, GA: CEP, (195).

Raghunathan, Anuradha. (May 11, 2003) "What you can do to beat pink-slip blues," The Dallas Morning News.

Reorganization Report (2002), University of California at San Diego. Retrieved on May 25, 2003 from http://tpot.ucsd.edu/Cataloging/S_heads/Projects/2002/reorganization.html

Rummler, Geary A., and Alan P Brache. (1990) Improving performance: How to manage the white space on the organization chart (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pheiffer Publishers (64).

Authors

Danny Langdon. One of the key model-makers in the business of performance improvement and work innovation. Danny Langdon has innovated a number of systems for improving work—most notably the Language of Work model.   He has been a member of the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) for 36 years, is an honorary life member, authored seven books and chapters in a dozen others, and has trained hundreds of practitioners in instructional and performance technology.   He is a past international president of ISPI.   Together with his partner in life and business, they run Performance International—a consulting firm dedicated to understanding and aligning work in business. Danny can be reached at 360.738.4010, or danny@performanceinternational.com

Kathleen Whiteside. Kathleen S. Whiteside, a founding partner of Performance International, specializes in facilitating performance improvement in individuals, groups and organizations. Her focus is to create success using performance technology. She is a past international president of ISPI and a Life Member of the Michigan chapter of ISPI.   She is a co-author of the leading resource on interventions, the "Intervention Resource Guide: 50 Performance Improvement Tools," Jossey-Bass, 1999. 360-738.4010, Kathleen can be reached at 360.738.4010 or kathleen@performanceinternational.com.