

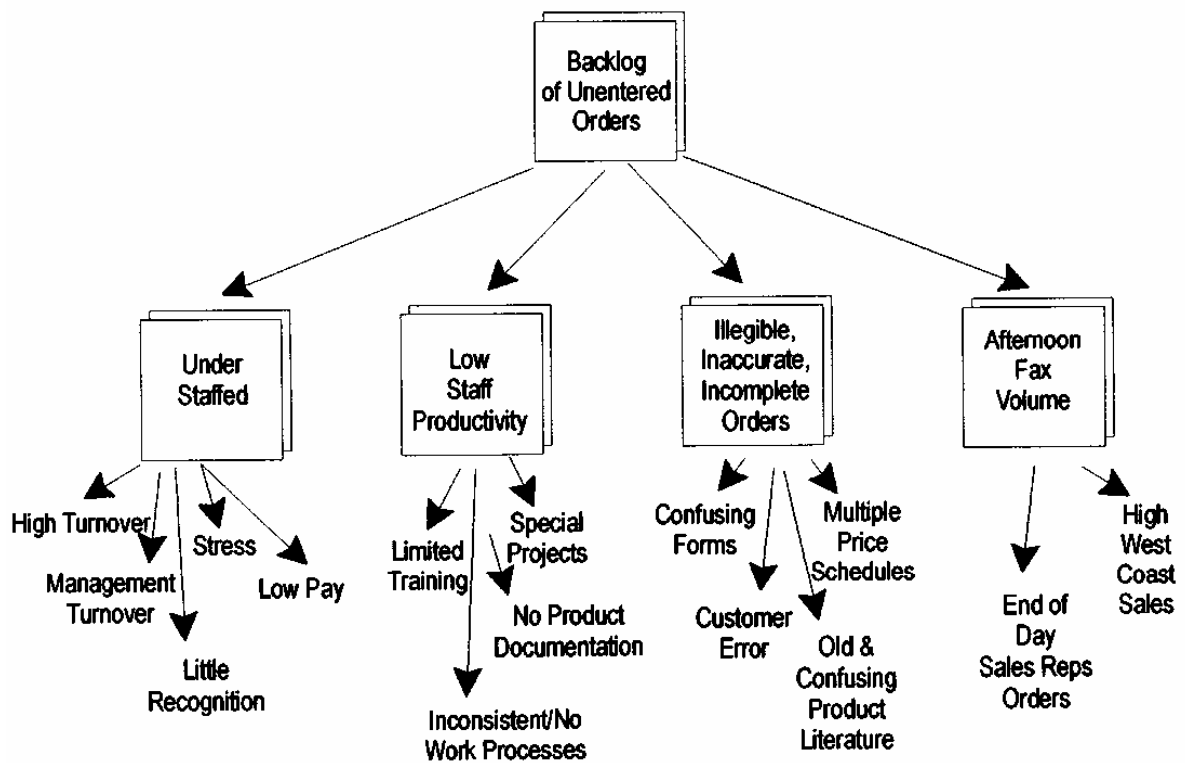
Lesson Five: FOCUS - Select and Test Changes Aimed at Performance Improvement

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A. What are the possible causes of current unsatisfactory process performance? (use Why-Why Diagram, Interrelationship Digraph, Cause and Effect/Fishbone Diagram)

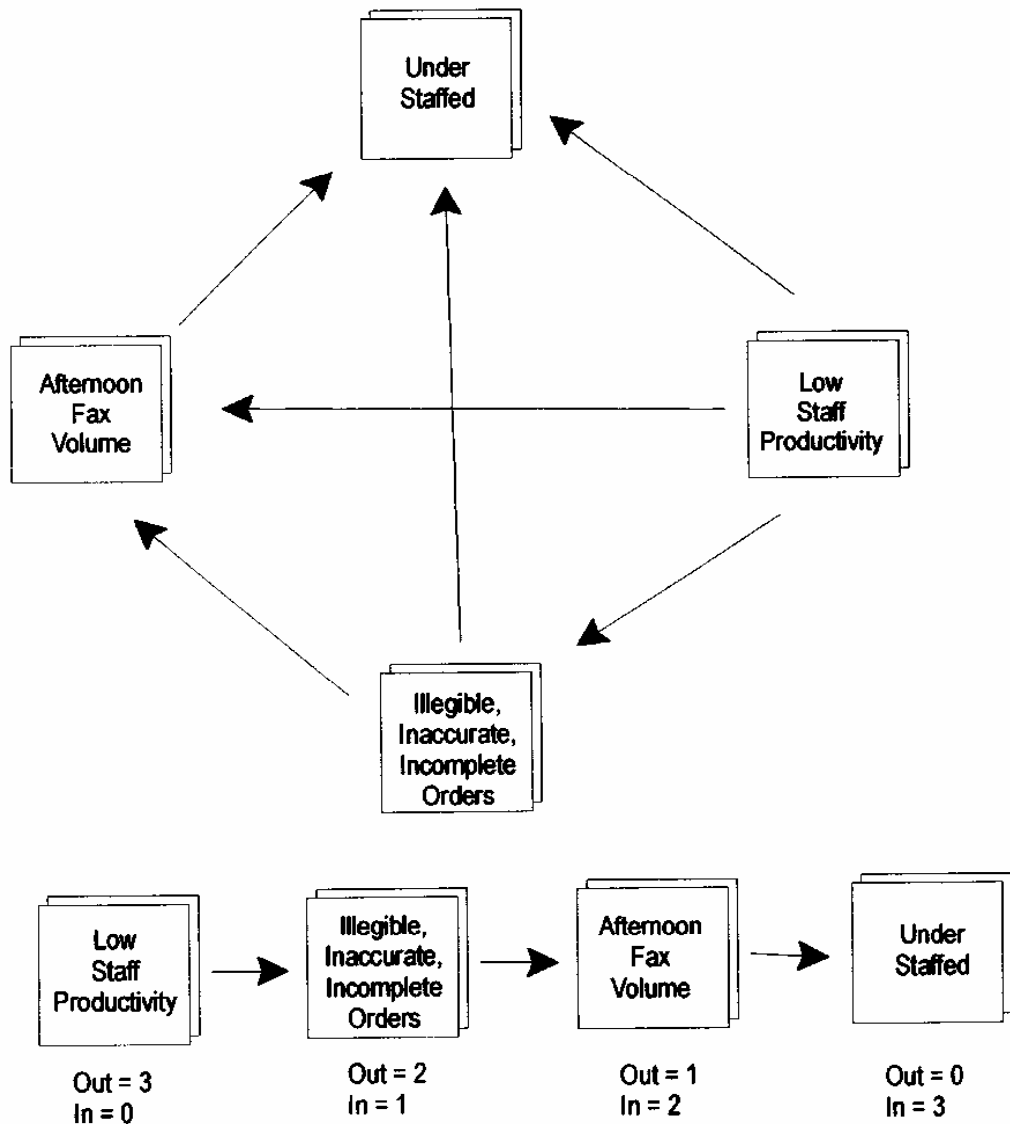
The FOCUS Team next explored the reasons for daily fax back log. They used the Why/Why (Tree) diagram below to chart possible causes of poor performance.

Why/Why Diagram

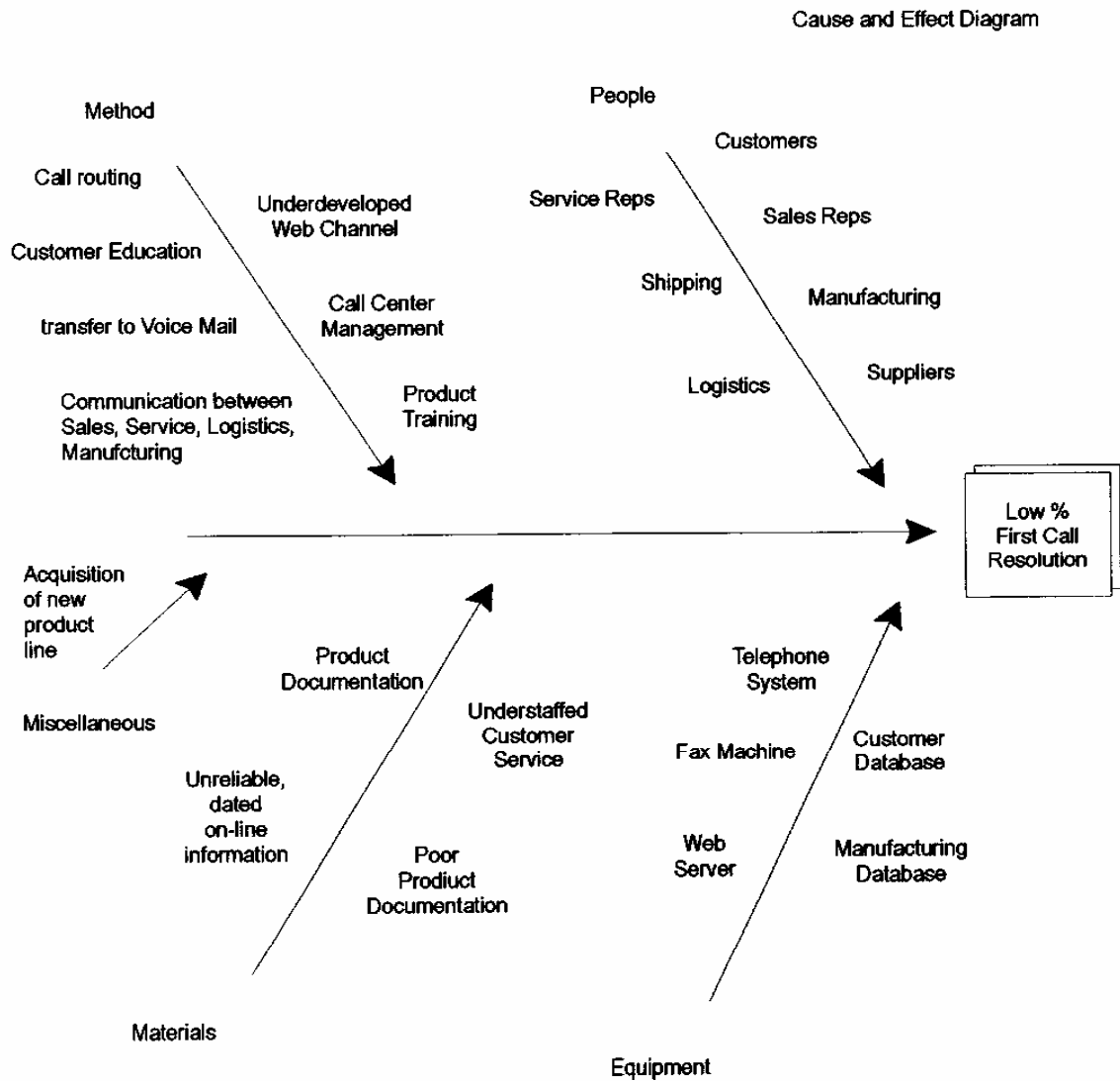


The FOCUS team next used the Interrelationship Digraph below to map connections/relationships among the major causes of poor performance. Each arrow indicate the dominant flow between each element. For example, the team believes that low staff productivity creates increased (and often unnecessary) stress and job dissatisfaction which in turn contributes to higher rates of employee burn-out and turnover.

Interrelationship Digraph

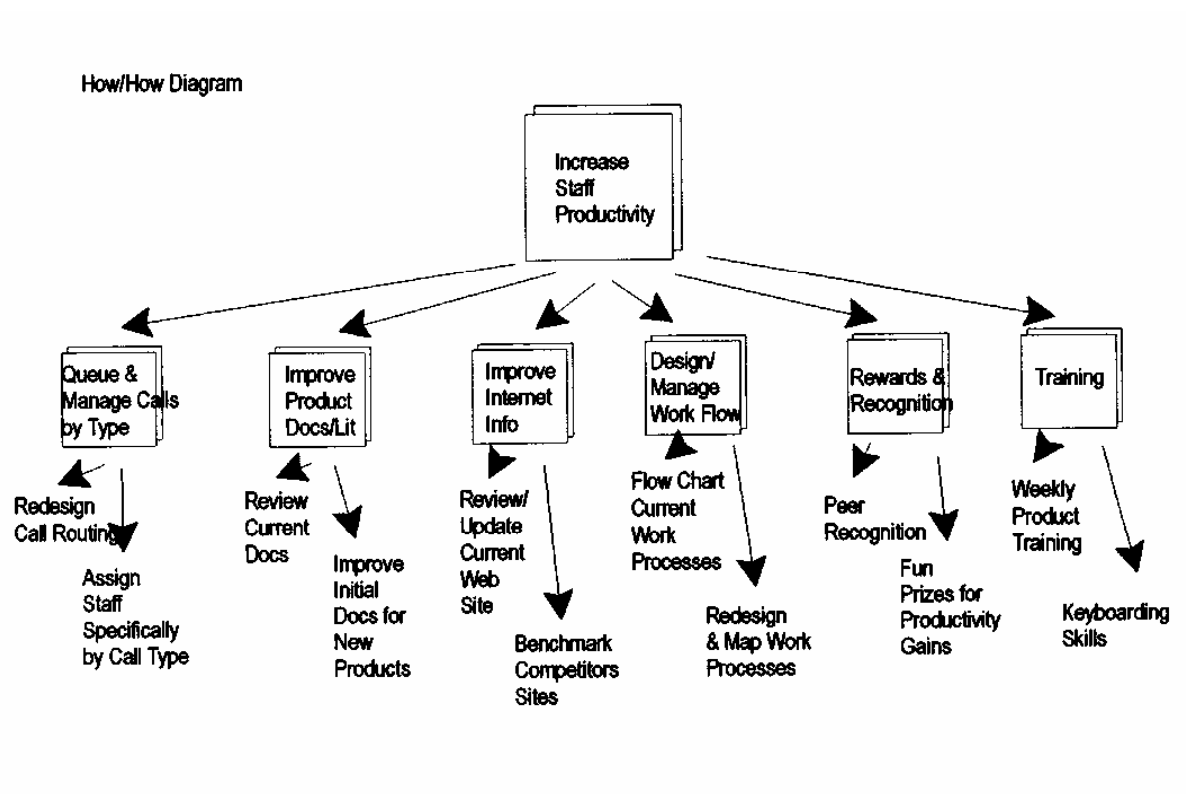


The FOCUS team also considered the high volume of calls that reps could not handle/resolve on the first call. When calls are not resolved the first time, reps must call customers back. This contributes significantly to increased workload and lost productivity. The Team prepared the Cause and Effect Diagram below that shows causes of poor 1st call resolution.



B. What actions will likely contribute to improvement of process performance? (use How-How Diagram)

The FOCUS team used the How/How (Tree) diagram below to explore alternative ways to increase staff productivity.



C. Which improvement action will you initiate to drive process improvement? (use Improvement Theory statement)

To improve satisfaction with our customer service processes with specific focus on these measures:

- decreasing backlog of orders to be entered
- increasing the percentage of calls resolved/handled on the first call
- decreasing the percentage of calls abandoned

We will:

Redesign the fax order process with emphasis on clearer responsibilities for fax order entry and better methods/forms/customer education to decrease volume of illegible and inaccurate faxes

Redesign of the call management process with call routing that separates and services parts/warranty calls from other calls and new consistent work processes that emphasize increased accuracy and higher percentage of 1st call resolution

D. How will you initiate this improvement action? Who will do what, when? (use Gantt Chart)

Here is the FOCUS team’s project plan for performance improvement.

Gantt Chart

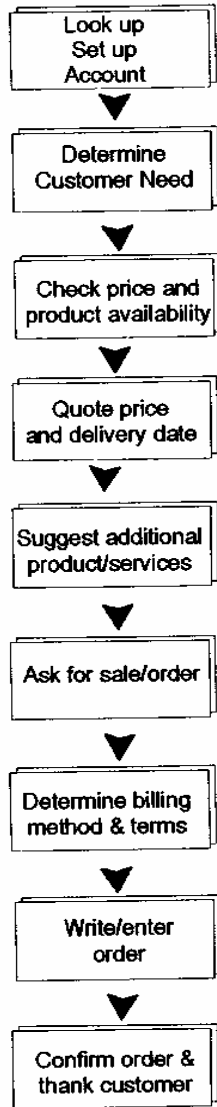
Task to be accomplished: Customer Service Performance Improvement

What is to be done?	Who is to do it?	By when?													
		3/1	3/15	4/1	4/15	5/1	5/15	6/1	6/15	7/1	7/15	8/1	8/15		
FORM TEAM	CS director	→													
ORIENT/TRAIN TEAM	HR coach	→	→												
MAP CURRENT SERVICES	Team	→	→												
Baseline DATA collection	CS team leader		→	→											
Cause+Effect Analysis	Team			→	→										
Improvement Theory	Team				→	→									
FAX PROCESS IMPROVEMENT	CS team leader					→	→								
Call Process Improvement	CS team leader					→	→								
DATA TO VERIFY IMPROVEMENT	CS team leader							→	→						
Communicate Learning	Team									→	→				

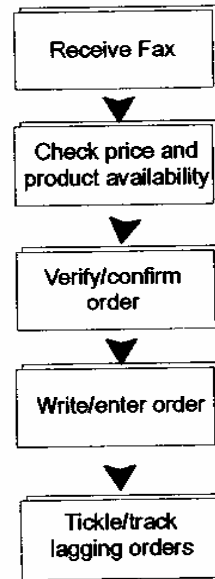
E. Document improvement action(s).

Here are the redesign flow processes for customer calls and fax orders. Both processes have added steps to confirm customer needs and availability and price of requested product. These steps should increase accuracy of the orders and decrease rework and costs of poor initial quality. They also will strengthen communication and relationships with customers.

Call Management Flow Chart (revised)



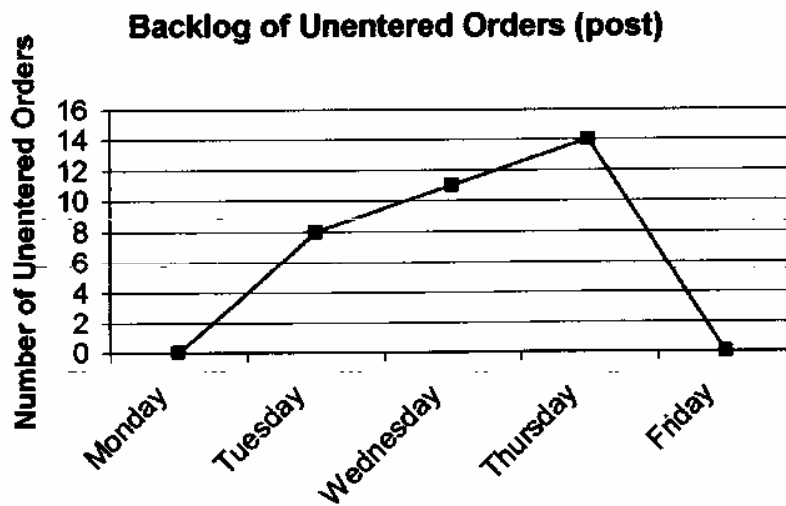
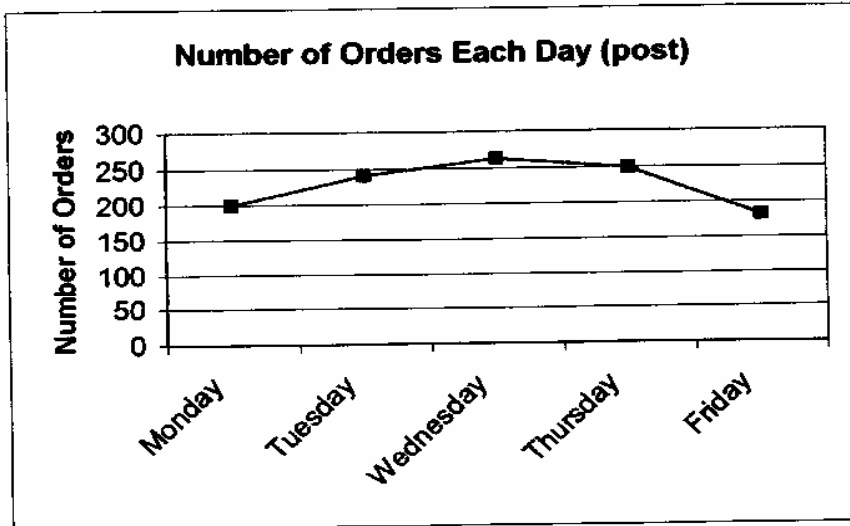
Fax Order Flow Chart (revised)



F. Has the improvement action resulted in positive changes in key performance measures? (use Run Chart)

The charts below show measured improvement that has resulted from the FOCUS team's work.

The average total numbers of orders handled each day has increased from 194 to 227.
The average backlog of daily unentered orders has decreased from 22 to 7.



- G. What have you learned from this improvement effort? How can you share what you have learned throughout your business?

The FOCUS team documented its approach and results which it has posted on the Olympia intranet.

The FOCUS team's success is considered an early example/company model for other Olympia performance improvement team.

FOCUS team members are helping coach/facilitate company performance improvement efforts in other business functions.

The FOCUS team has also initiated a new performance improvement effort for customer service.

The company is increasing its investment in training all employees in performance improvement. It is currently designing a corporate framework that links performance improvement training with a formal cost savings/avoidance program that includes gainsharing for employees.

2. Additional Resources and Links to Other Sources

Richard Chang and Mathew Niedzwiecki, *Continuous Improvement Tools, Volumes 1 & 2*. (Richard Chang Associates)

Dianne Galloway, *Mapping Work Processes*. (ASQ Quality Press)

GOAL/QPC, *The Memory Jogger II: A Pocket Guide of Tools for Continuous Improvement and Effective Planning*. (Telephone 1.800.643.4316)

GOAL/QPC, *Problem Solving Machine for the Memory Jogger II*. (Telephone 1.800.643.4316)

Peter Mears, *Quality Improvement Tools & Techniques*. (McGraw-Hill)

3. Question(s) for Reflection and Discussion

What will you remember most from this class one year from today? How will you apply what you have learned in the next 12 weeks?