



Diagnosing System Performance Issues

Use these questions in conjunction with the OSEP and CADRE self-assessment tools to further diagnose performance issues.

1. Expectations and Alignment

- ❖ Determine what the end game is. Ask questions like:
 - What would success look like?
 - How will we know when we're done?
- ❖ Identify who has a connection with this issue. Ask questions like:
 - Who else makes decisions about this issue?
 - Who is affected by this problem?
 - What other departments or processes does this issue show up in?

2. Priorities

- ❖ Identify critical goals. Ask questions like:
 - What results are we accountable for?
 - What targets do we need to hit by the end of this year to be successful?
 - What are our greatest needs?
 - Where do we have greatest leadership and stakeholder interest?
 - How do our priorities align with the SEA's?
 - What do we have the capacity to work on this year?

3. Performance Drivers

- ❖ Identify the performance that is critical or has the most impact on whether or not the priorities are achieved. Ask questions like:
 - What area has the biggest impact on whether or not this goal gets met?
 - Are there some performance results that have more impact on this goal than others?
 - What performance results have to happen in order to make this goal?

4. Standards and Measures

- ❖ Seek exemplars or top performers. Ask questions like:
 - Is there someone who consistently performs better than anyone else?
 - What makes them so good?
- ❖ Identify outputs or accomplishments that can be measured. Ask questions like:
 - In order to do what?
 - What are the positive measurable results we are looking for?
 - What tasks or steps does staff or the practitioner need to take to achieve these results?

5. Cause Analysis

- ❖ “Why?” is always a great question for getting to the root cause of a problem.
- ❖ Look to bound the problem: Ask questions like:
 - When did it first appear?
 - Where does the issue show up?
- ❖ Understand the work and its environment.
 - What are the consequences for doing this wrong?
 - How does the staff or practitioner know when they are performing poorly?
 - Describe how staff and practitioners get feedback on their work.
 - What else is going on when they do this work?
 - How does the exemplar do it differently?
- ❖ Recognize that where a problem shows up is not likely to be where it was caused.
- ❖ Identify the work process involved. Good questions to get at this are:
 - What is the step in the process prior to where the problem shows up?
 - How does the step prior to this affect the work?
 - What headaches or aggravations do staff or practitioners encounter during this stage of the process?