

Reading: Check Results

### **Why Check Results?**

Checking results helps ensure that the change implementation process is working as intended. Some key points to remember are as follows:

- Evaluation criteria are directly linked to the results the organization expects to achieve with the change. When these results measures are articulated up front, the organization can design for the change with the end in mind. Checking results, therefore, should be an “aforethought,” not an afterthought.
- When the organization communicates its intent to check results, it conveys that the change is results oriented. It is not simply a “feel good” effort. This increases the attention people pay to making it work.
- Checking results points out achievements along the way. Successes, whether large or small, should be recognized and celebrated. Celebrating success reinvigorates the organization and motivates people to tackle the next set of challenges. It fosters commitment to the change.

### **Establishing Goals**

The evaluation plan should specify why the organization is monitoring and checking results, and what it intends to measure:

- Should it measure results such as:
  - Customer satisfaction?
  - Cycle time?
  - Service quality?
  - Costs/financial outcomes?
- Should it measure processes such as:
  - Communication?
  - Flow of information?
  - Problem-solving abilities?
  - Decision-making processes?
  - Handling of conflict?

### **Determining Data Collection Strategies**

The evaluation plan should specify sources of data, methods of collecting data and timeframes:

- **Sources**—Customers? Other stakeholders? Senior management?
- **Methods**—Regular meetings with stakeholders? Implementation team? “Walking around”? Interviews? Surveys? Focus groups? Statistical data from reports (for example, cost data, productivity, and quality)?

#### **When It Comes To Data Collection—It’s All in the Timing**

Collecting data only once is less valuable than measuring results over time. However, keep in mind that every measure imposes a burden on the respondent and the interpreter. The benefits of collecting data should be greater than the costs of collecting it.

Just as there is no one right way to design a change, there is no one right way to check the results of its success. Each organization must develop an evaluation plan and measures that make sense, given its situation and the nature of the change.

## **Identifying Communication and Feedback Strategies**

The evaluation plan should specify ways of communicating the results and to whom including:

- **Communication Media**—Written report? Briefings? Meetings?
- **The Audience**—To the entire organization? Customers and other stakeholders? Union partners?

Remember, feedback will have the greatest impact if it is:

- Provided in a timely way. The more immediate the feedback, the better.
- Communicated simply and succinctly.
- Specific in terms of how well goals or performance standards were met.

## **Establishing an Action Plan**

The evaluation plan should specify plans for implementing decisions based on the findings:

- How will follow-up activities be implemented?
- How will existing plans need to be revised to account for follow-up?
- What impact will follow-up activities have on other timelines, production, resources, etc.?
- How achievements will be celebrated?

## **Celebrating Achievements**

Some ways to celebrate achievements:

- Parties in the office
- Verbal praise, on the spot
- A management-sponsored get-together outside of work
- An unexpected afternoon off
- A congratulatory visit from senior management
- An announcement in a newsletter

A mix of methods works best. It is always a good idea to ask people how they like to be shown appreciation, so you are rewarding them the way they prefer.