

Figure 1: Checklist for Improving Work Performance

P. WRIGHT and D. TAYLOR (1984)

1. What is the problem in behavioural terms? What precisely is the individual doing or not doing which is adversely influencing his or her performance?
2. Is the problem really serious enough to spend time and effort on?
3. What reasons might there be for the performance problem? (see column 1)
4. What actions might be taken to improve the situation? (see column 2)

Possible reasons for the performance problem	Possible solutions
Goal clarity Is the person fully aware of the job requirements?	Give guidance concerning expected goals and standards. Set targets. MBO.
Ability Does the person have the capacity to do the job well?	Provide formal training, on the job coaching, practice, secondment, etc.
Task difficulty Does the person find the task too demanding?	Simplify task, reduce work load, reduce time pressures etc.
Intrinsic motivation Does the person find the task rewarding in itself?	Redesign job to match job-holders needs.
Extrinsic motivation Is good performance rewarded by others?	Arrange positive consequences for good performance and zero or negative consequences for poor performance.
Feedback Does the person receive adequate feedback about his/her performance?	Provide or arrange feedback.
Resources Does the person have adequate resources for satisfactory task performance?	Provide staff equipment, raw materials as appropriate.
Working conditions Do working conditions, physical or social, interfere with performance?	Improve light, heat, layout, remove distractions, etc as appropriate.

5. Do you have sufficient information to select the most appropriate solutions? If not, collect the information required e.g. consult records, observe work behaviour, talk to person concerned.
6. Select most appropriate solution(s).
7. Is the solution worthwhile in cost benefit terms?
 - a. If so, implement it.
 - b. If not, work through the checklist again, or relocate the individual, or reorganise the department/organisation, or live with the problem.
8. Could you have handled the problem better? If so, review own performance. If not, and the problem is solved, reward yourself and tackle next problem.