



EMERGING PRACTICES



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Getting to “Why”: Corrective Action Plans and Root Cause Analysis

By: Mia Pritts and Mark Parker

Background

Mia Pritts

- ▶ Early Care and Education consultant with 25+ years in the field
 - 12+ years working in childcare programs
 - 12+ years working in support of stabilizing childcare business tools & technology
- ▶ Previously managed 250+ teachers and directors serving 1,000+ children and families



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Mark Parker

- ▶ President at Outlier Technologies and original author of SansWrite
- ▶ 25+ years of experience working with Regulatory Agencies and Regulated Businesses throughout the US and Canada
- ▶ Former National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) Board Member, Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee



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Polling Question #1

Please describe your current experience with supervising or managing staff:

- I'm new to supervising — just starting to manage others.
- I lead a classroom or program and supervise support staff or assistants.
- I've been supervising for a while but still working on my leadership skills.
- I'm an experienced leader — managing staff is a big part of my role.
- I don't supervise directly, but I coach, train, or support those who do.
- I don't supervise or manage anyone in my current role.



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Current Situation



What is the root cause?

The core issue, the underlying cause, that sets in motion an entire cause-and-effect reaction that ultimately leads to problem(s).

What is Root Cause Analysis (RCA)?



Source of Truth



Source: Sidney Yoshida (1989)

Building Rapport

- ▶ Catch people doing something right
 - Personal, Intentional, Specific
- ▶ Peer-to-Peer Recognition
 - Encourage staff to catch each other doing something right
- ▶ 5:1 Feedback Ratio
 - Research suggests five positive for every negative



Polling Question #2

Reflection: do you intentionally practice 'catching your staff doing something right'?

- No, I don't currently do this.
- Not yet — I've never thought about it that way.
- Occasionally — I try, but it's not consistent.
- Yes — it's part of my regular practice with staff.

True vs. Truth

True

Our interpretations and judgements about events. True is the way you see things or the story in your head.

- A staff member did not wash her hands; she doesn't care about hygiene.
- Someone left wheelchairs in front of the side door; they don't care about fire safety.
- My boss didn't return my email; she doesn't care about what I need.

Truth

The facts or reality of the situation without opinion, judgement, or influence. Truth is the objective, non-negotiable fact.

- A staff member did not wash her hands.
- Someone left wheelchairs in front of the side door.
- My boss didn't return my email.

Leading Powerful Conversations

- ▶ Empowering Questions
 - Questions that cause a person to search for answers or new possibilities.
- ▶ Listening
 - To fully concentrate, understand, remember and respond to what is being said.
- ▶ Clarifying
 - To make a statement or situation less confusing and more comprehensible.
- ▶ Acknowledging
 - To let a person know that you are truly listening and care about what they have said.
- ▶ Validating
 - To recognize or affirm worth and normalcy of feelings.

Mediator of Thinking



Starters

- What can we do about...?
- What's our next step?
- How can we find out more?

Non-starters

- Asking "why" or "who" questions
- Asking long-winded and complex questions
- Asking leading or manipulative questions

- Be comfortable with silence while the individual processes
- Avoid "filling the void"

- Read body language
- Read energy level
- Listen to tone of voice
- Focus on what "is" and "is not" said
- Respond to feelings that were not said verbally

Clarify

- Tell me more...
- Help me understand...

Acknowledge






- I'm hearing you say...
- In other words...

Validate

- It's understandable...
- Given your situation...

Polling Question #3

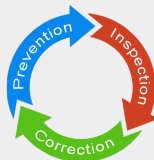
Does your organization require any type of leadership or professional management training?

-  Yes – Internally Provided (by in-house team or leadership)
-  Yes – Provided by an External Consultant
-  Yes – Through Formal Training Courses (online or in-person)
-  No – None of the Above
-  Not Applicable to My Role or Organization

Storytime

Correction Phase

- ▶ Immediate Action(s)
 - Document steps taken to address non-compliance and conduct *root cause analysis*
- ▶ Preventative Action(s)
 - Develop plan of improvement based on findings from the *root cause analysis*
- ▶ Ongoing Monitoring
 - Conduct internal reviews to confirm the plan of improvement's effectiveness in preventing non-compliances



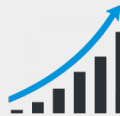
Building an Internal Culture of Growth

- ▶ Introduce at a staff meeting
 - What (ongoing improvement of the overall program)
 - Why (building trust among and between teams, building pathways for stronger communication and success)
 - How (in the moment, 1:1, during team meetings)
- ▶ Set a start date and a goal
 - This helps formalize the process and build muscle memory
- ▶ Review how it's going at next staff meeting
 - What has gone well, what has not, objective analysis and ideas to iterate



Expanding Growth Opportunities

- ▶ Moving from reactive to proactive
- ▶ Get buy-in from staff on where to focus
- ▶ Assign people specific roles and tasks
- ▶ Review how it's going and how to adapt as needed
- ▶ Related: Non-monetary retention strategies



Keys to Success

- ▶ Build Rapport
 - Focus on catching people doing something right
- ▶ True vs. Truth
 - Set aside your interpretations and judgements
- ▶ Lead Powerful Conversations
 - Avoid asking "why" and "who" questions





Root Cause Reflection Questions

(For Supervisors to Use in 1:1 or Supervision Meetings)

What part of your role feels most challenging right now?

Are there tools, resources, or information you feel you're missing to be successful?

How clear do you feel about what's expected of you in this role?

What part of your work do you enjoy the most right now? The least?

What would help you feel more connected or valued in your role?

What gets in the way when you're trying to do your best work?

Are there any recurring issues that have been difficult to solve on your own?

What's one small win we could aim for together this week?

What support or feedback from me would help you move forward?



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Next Steps

► Friends and Family

- Practice in a safe environment

► Identify Minor Issue(s)

- Try RCA, use Corrective Action strategies, monitor changes

► Reflection or Retrospective

- What worked well and what didn't work



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Q&A



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Thank you!

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