

Title of Paper: Needs Assessment

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Needs assessment**

The Instructional Design team of Advanced Solutions Experts conducted a needs assessment on Fast Fix Workshop Inc. to determine the causes of decreasing performance levels at the small business. The needs assessment was completed from 01 December to 13 December 2021 and analysed current performance levels compared to the desired level of performance required to increase productivity.

### **Survey methodology and participation**

The needs assessment used interviews, surveys and observations to obtain information. These instruments were developed using the background knowledge and extant data from the company. Participation was extended to the owner of Fast Fix Workshop as well as the employees and the clients of the company.

### **Findings**

The key findings are:

The desired and current levels of communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.- Communication levels have not reached the desired level of 100% as there is only a level of 25% of communication between departments and employees.

The use of existing communication systems- there is no effective communication system at Fast Fix Workshop. 100% of the employees surveyed have corroborated this evidence and suggest that there needs to be more communication via meetings and staff briefings.

The workflow and processes employed at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.- There is no clear procedure in place for proper prioritization, scheduling and appropriating timelines to new or existing jobs. There is no authorization of timelines and insufficient tracking of job timelines interdepartmentally resulting in customer delays. From the survey 100% of employees indicated that there was no system set up to monitor the flow of communication and the gap analysis confirmed this.

The needs of the organisation as it relates to closing the performance gap- the priority is given to communication and documentation within the company as once these performance gaps are closed and are closer to the desired levels, the effect would be seen among client satisfaction.

The level of satisfaction by clients- Fast Fix Workshop Inc. aims to have a 100% level of satisfaction among their clients base. At present, there is only a 53.3% level of satisfaction by the clients thus an existing gap of 46.7% that are not satisfied with the service of Fast Fix Workshop. The level of satisfaction is expressed more among the females as 33.3% of males are satisfied with the service given by Fast Fix while 20% of females are satisfied.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the results of the needs assessment, Advanced Solution Experts proposes a series of solutions to improve the flow of communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. as well as to account for incoming jobs.

The introduction of monthly staff meetings and weekly department briefings are to be undertaken without delay so that the communication levels can reach the desired levels as quickly as possible. This inturn is expected to have a positive effect on employee motivation and on client satisfaction.

The development and implementation of the Fast Update App. This App's primary purpose is to record and track all jobs from reception to delivery and to provide a viable communication channel within and among departments. It will be tailored to the specific needs of Fast Fix Workshop Inc. so that the workflow process becomes automated.

A strategic plan will be developed for a five year duration with the assistance of the employees so that they support the plan and buy-in to its utility. This will help to facilitate the introduction of the electronic performance support system.

### **Background**

Fast Fix Workshop Inc., named fictitiously, is a privately owned automobile repair and restoration company in Barbados that offers a range of services to its clients including paint jobs, prefabrication, body work, mobile unit fabrications, vehicular refurbishments and collision repairs. In spite of its specialised area, the company makes use of its skilled employees' special talents and has extended its services to include general fabrication, refrigeration and air condition services as well as producing and selling retractable garbage skip bins. The 19 year old business is owned and managed by Gary Hinds who expressed that the bureaucracies involved in the process of small business owners receiving funding and financial support has halted the business' success on several occasions.

This inflexible process recently impacted the business negatively and in the early period of 2020, the business was forced to downsize its staff from a 63 line-staff to 38 staff members. This resulted in a slow production line which then placed a demand on those strained line workers to finish more jobs at unreasonable times. Consequently, the company was not satisfying clients' needs due to a prolonged wait time for the return of their products and services. Fortunately and due to its diversification of products and services, the company has

been able to revive the business. Gary Hinds further stated that the diversification of products and services has benefitted and picked up business since the novel services and products are now in high demand by their clients. Subsequently, they were able to recruit new staff members. The business welcomed fourteen newly recruited employees which make up a total of fifty-two line workers, eight administration staff and five supervisors. The business is divided into four departments which consist of the body work section, general fabrication, bus and body work and refrigeration and air conditioning. Gary Hinds has noticed that in spite of the slight boom, customers are still dissatisfied with the slow returns of products and services.

At the preliminary interview stage with senior management, Advanced Solutions Experts was able to garner that senior management is displeased with the imbalance of high salaried skilled workers and their low production performance. On the other hand, line workers are disgruntled about the immobility and stagnation of their jobs. They expressed dissatisfaction with management's dependency on their skills that called for them to expend time in uncomfortable positions, working overtime, lifting heavy equipment and inhaling perilous fumes, in some instances, and management's low praise and recognition in exchange for the hard work and quality post production and labour. Due to senior management's strong position regarding their felt need, Gary Hinds has decided to contract Advanced Solutions Experts to conduct a needs assessment for the workshop.

### **Problem statement**

The problem at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. has been identified as a lack of communication among departments. At present, there is a poor communication system that only facilitates a 10% communication flow, where, when jobs enter the workshop, Gary Hinds and or a supervisor talks to the client but there is seldom communication with other supervisors from other departments

until a few days later, or a day prior to the job being passed over to another department.

Additionally, 75% of the jobs being returned are at a far later date than expected and this causes further issues as clients are dissatisfied with the unexpected and overdue completed dates.

Moreover, there is no technological communication system. The transfer of jobs to departments is mainly done by supervisors by word of mouth, hours before or sometimes days before. When jobs enter the workshop, they may be accepted by the supervisors but there is very little feedback given concerning pertinent details such as tentative deadline dates by client or the professional, in this case, the supervisor.

### **Target audience**

This needs assessment targets four groups combined of both performers and decision makers. Rothwell and Kazanas (2008) advance that collecting data from performers allows you to identify who is affected by the performance problem. It will include individuals who interact frequently with these employees such as supervisors, managers and clients. Additionally Rothwell et al (2008) maintain that ensuring support and buy-in from the decision makers is necessary to ensure a successful needs assessment and so the owner of Fast Fix Workshop will be included in the target audience.

- Five supervisors who were on staff for more than ten years and have a great sense of the business process and what it entails. These supervisors have exhibited good company loyalty, are skilled and are tasked with delegating and overseeing their charges' work and performance. Supervisors are expected to interact with each other, ensure that workers under their supervision have the necessary tools and resources to complete the job, make orders if items are out of stock and provide clear instructions and guidance as necessary.



- Fifty-two skilled workers whereby 92% of these workers have acquired formal trades and skills through postsecondary accreditation at a trade school in Barbados or elsewhere. The other 8% were recruited and trained on the job and or have learned through experience. These skilled workers are expected to adhere to supervisors' instructions pertaining to jobs and interact with workers in other departments.
- The administrative staff-The administrative staff handle the paperwork processed within the company and so there should be a constant flow of information to this department. This group of staff processes the job sheets after they have been signed off and completed by the supervisor so that the customer can be billed. They also have to contact the clients to advise of the final charges and collection or drop off time for their vehicles or appliances.
- Clients of Fast Fix Workshop Inc.- The clients are an integral component of the company where some are long standing clients from the creation of the business and they range from both the private and public sector. Some have expressed dissatisfaction with the untimely delivery and the delay of the product or service.

### Possible performance gap

**Table 1: Possible Performance Gap**

Desired Performance	Performance Gap	Actual Performance	Notes
98% of products and services delivered to clients on time	There is a need to improve products and services delivered to clients by 48%	50% of products and services are delivered to clients on time	75% of the jobs being returned are at a far later date than expected (Preliminary survey).

99% flow of communication among departments	There is a need to improve flow of communication by 89%	10% flow of communication among departments	There is seldom communication with other supervisors from other departments (Preliminary survey).
95% client satisfaction	There is a need to improve client satisfaction by 45%	50% client satisfaction	Some clients have expressed dissatisfaction with the untimely delivery and the delay of the product or service (Preliminary survey).
95% utilisation of a technological communication system	There is a 95% need for a technological communication system	0% utilisation of a technological communication system	There is no technological communication system (Preliminary survey).

### Objectives, Assessment and Surveys

#### Objectives

The objectives follow the format as noted in the Needs Assessment template of Training Needs Assessment Report Public Library Institutions and Communal Cultural Post Offices in Thai Nguyen, Nghe An and Tra Vinh Provinces. (2009).

#### *Overall objective*

The overall objective is to conduct a needs assessment to discover the performance issues at Fast Fix Workshop Inc., its root causes and to make recommendations in order to close the gap in performance.

#### *Specific Objectives*

The specific objectives of the needs assessment will be to:

1. Assess the desired and current levels of communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.
2. Identify the gaps present among the target audience in their use of existing communication systems.
3. Assess the workflow and processes employed at Fast Fix Workshop nc..
4. Prioritise the needs of the organisation as it relates to closing the performance gap.
5. Assess the level of satisfaction by clients
6. Recommend the best course of action to meet the desired performance levels.

### **Assessment methods and survey tools**

#### **Method of confirming gap**

##### *Organisational Analysis*

An organisational analysis, according to Van Tiem, Moseley and Dessinger (2012) looks into the heart of the organisation as all elements should be strategically aligned (p.185). The organisational analysis for Fast Fix Workshop Inc. was completed using the Business Logic Model and more specifically the customer, internal, process and product logics.

##### *Organisational analysis- Customer Logic*

#### **Market Strategy**

How are you segmenting the market?

Fast Fix Workshop Inc began its business primarily surrounding vehicle body work, painting and general repairs targeting both the private and public sectors. As a result of internal economic shortfall and financial restraints, the business was diversified to accommodate bus

body fabrication and air conditioning and refrigeration. The market seeks to service both individuals and entities.

Which segment(s) are you going after? Why?

The company targets individuals and entities in need of bus body fabrications mainly. Since this market calls for customisation of their product, this segment of the market gains a lot of the company's attention. This market is customer-oriented as it forges a relationship between the business and the client(s). It entails a large amount of personnel from the draftsmen who sit, discuss and design based on clients' descriptions and lastly the line workers who have to precise and produce the final product. It is usually at this stage that clients' satisfaction and their eventual referrals are returned. Moreover, since the company is the only business in Barbados that makes bus bodies, a lot of the business' personnel, materials and resources go toward that area in particular.

### **Relationship versus transaction strategy**

Are you focusing on building a high volume of transactions, or more on developing long-term relationships with customers? Why?

There is a mixture of focusing on acquiring jobs as well as developing and sustaining long-term relationships with customers. According to Gary Hinds, the products and services are in very high demand. This then benefits the company as the volume of transactions has counteracted some of the issues experienced which deterred the business from being successful previously. Similarly, much emphasis is being placed on sustaining customer relationships through promoting a professional environment. The owner strives to be business-like, provide a quality product and to deliver on time.

**Measures**

What are the key metrics your organisation looks at to determine how well its customer logic is working?

Fast Fix Workshop uses quotations as a metric to determine how well its customer logic is working. It looks at the amount of quotations that potential customers request and the number of those jobs that they actually receive.

*Organisational analysis- Product Logic*

**Product Strategy**

How are you satisfying customers' needs?

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. monopolises the bus body market as well as the fact that it has created other niche markets to attract an even more unique clientele. It uses three strategies to ensure customer satisfaction which include providing quality products at affordable prices, specialising in customizations and professionalism to satisfy customers' needs. In addition, there is a lot of groundwork that goes on as it relates to being open to new ideas, constantly looking for new ways to improve the product and keeping costs low to the client and recruiting new staff members who are creative and who may have special talents.

**Differentiation**

What is it about your product that makes it distinctive or unique? What are you doing to differentiate it?

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. creates a competitive advantage by being the sole company in Barbados that fabricates bus bodies. In addition, its customisations and configurations make it stand out among competitors. Other differentiating factors that should be considered include the

high emphasis placed on producing a quality product which means smooth finishes, sturdy and reliable products, spotless paint jobs and unblemished body work to name a few.

### **Company Image**

What is the image your company projects in order to appeal to customers?

The company projects a sustainable message to its customers. It supports local businesses as much as possible when purchasing stock and raw materials. In addition, the company majorly recruits local staff members as this assists in decreasing the local unemployment rate. This concentrated focus on employing and buying locally assists in keeping wealth within the country, thereby increasing the standard of living for all. As a result customers are more likely to and keen on patronising Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

What is the company's reputation with its customers?

The company has mixed reputations with its customers. With a certain group of customers where deliveries were on time and there was a high satisfaction with the product, customers were pleased and would speak highly of the business. There often tends to be a repeat of these customers. On the other hand, there may be some customers who may be disgruntled because of the delay of the product or service.

### **Measures**

What are the key metrics your organisation looks at to determine how well its product logic is working?

To measure how well its product logic is working, Fast Fix Workshop Inc. uses customers' reviews and referrals as well as their responses to their product and services. Moreover, it integrates and combines this metric along with their delivery time to determine its product logic functionality.

*Organisational analysis- Process Logic***Research and development process (product development)**

How do you provide new products and services?

Fast Fix Workshop uses informal market research such as looking at trends in the environment and clients' requests to determine what clients need and how best they could design a product or service to meet those needs. For instance, in the case of the retractable garbage bins, this product design came from an environmental issue in the country whereby there was low garbage collection and garbage in certain neighbourhoods were unsightly strewn around. This idea led to draftsmen creating drafts and line workers creating models. Additionally, a similar approach to bus body fabrication where customers frequently inquired about the service and the business eventually did their own research, used personnel to determine how it could be done and experimented accordingly.

**Production, logistics processes or both**

What happens inside the organisation to turn sales and raw materials into products and services delivered to the customer?

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. goes through a process of cutting, bending and welding material and joining them together to deliver a finished piece.

What are the five to seven biggest cross-organisational flow of events, and what groups participate in the process?

There is a cross-organisational flow of events and there is an interdependency on personnel from different departments. Most jobs that enter the workshop are to be moved, at some point, to the bodywork section and the paintshop. Moreover, bus body fabrication, one of

the company's most heavily relied on sections due to its customisations, entails the general fabrication section, bus and body work section and the paint shop mainly.

### **Post-sale process**

Does your company provide post-sale support to customers? In what ways? (customer satisfaction, technical support, repair, updates, and returns)

There are good post-sale processes. The company provides warranties. In addition, when or if customers report any issues, they are asked to return the vehicle so that further investigation can be done and any problems fixed.

### **Measures**

What are the key metrics your organisation looks at to determine how well its process logic is working?

The company uses metrics of time of delivery of the products and services as well as clients' feedback to determine how well its process logic is working.

### *Organisational analysis- Internal Logic*

### **Internal Structure**

What does your organisation chart look like?

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. has a hierarchical structure for its organizational chart that moves from the Managing Director, Workshop Foreman, Supervisors, Administration and Office Staff and Skilled Line Workers.

Why is it structured this way?

Gary Hinds believes that this chain of command is easier to operate and employees are aware of who they should report to whom.

### **Information Systems**



What are five to seven key decisions most people in your organisation have to make everyday?

There are two key decisions that employees need to make in the organization everyday. These include: who are the right personnel for the job and what are the right materials to use for the job.

How do they get the information they need to make those decisions?

Supervisors usually inform performers of these key decisions. Employees can make suggestions but they must first consult with supervisors and the client before making any changes.

## **Measures**

What are the key metrics your organization looks at to determine how well its Internal Logic is working?

### *1. Organisation structure*

- Health and safety - the organisation keeps quarterly records of accidents. It ideally expects to record 100% of accidents
- Customer satisfaction is to be at 98%
- Reward and recognition - The workshop intends to reward employees for their hard work, dedication and loyalty with bonuses and other incentives by compensating overtime pay, Christmas bonuses, paternity leave and other miscellaneous benefits as necessary.

### *2. Information Systems*

#### *a. Systems Performance*

- *Quality - Fast Fix Workshop Inc strives for 100% of their work to be unblemished and for 0% of vehicles to be returned.*

- *Process time* - The company's return rate on vehicles and services is to be at a 98% rate.

*b. Knowledge Management*

- *Knowledge availability* - Each employee is expected to be passed on 98% of pertinent information on jobs such as a rough estimation of time a job should be spent in a particular department, where it will go next and personnel involved in that section.
- *Knowledge effectiveness* - Recurring business problems such as low stock should be solved at a 98% degree rate. Since these issues occurred in the past, supervisors are asked when jobs come in, to make stock orders promptly so that stock can be replenished and there would be no delay. Other effectiveness issues, such as reduction on time, are expected to be handled by including more personnel on to jobs in a timely manner.

*3. Learning and Innovation*

- *Job design* - 98% of information is passed to employees from supervisors. Employees are encouraged to make suggestions but they cannot make any changes to the product or service without first consulting their respective supervisor and or the client.
- *Cost* - The workshop desires to price their product competitively and affordably. It seeks to reduce its cost by five to 10% lower than their competitors. They usually are informed of whether their cost is effective by the returns on jobs after a quotation is given.

- Sustainability - The workshop seeks to employ a 90% local workforce and to conduct business as it relates to the purchasing of raw materials and other stock with businesses that are 100% local and owned by Barbadians.

### *Environmental analysis*

Advanced Solutions Experts explored the actual organisational state by using a SWOT analysis. This analysis was scoped through the lens of contextual factors. An environmental analysis looks at the factors that hamper performance or inhibit the desired performance from occurring. As Tessmer and Harris (2012) advance, an environmental analysis looks at the systems and factors that affect learning or performance. Thus an environmental analysis was completed to scan the institution for the factors affecting the desired performance and provide important information on what is required in the organisation to meet its desired performance. The environmental analysis was completed using a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis gathers information from multiple stakeholders using a framework of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis template, 2015). This was combined with factors that can affect learning such as orienting, instructional, transfer and the environment as highlighted by Stefaniak (2021). Therefore, the environmental analysis was not only useful to determine gaps in performance but also to inform the designer of the types of solutions which can be used based on the learner relative to learner demographics and learner transfer.

In order to support the analysis of the environment, Advanced Solutions Experts circulated 30 questionnaires to employees where only 20 were returned and 25 surveys to customers whereby only 15 were returned which resulted in a response rate of 67% and 60% respectively. The team also used data from observations that observed the process of existing and new jobs in the workshop. To select the target audience from the population, a simple

random sampling technique was used. The majority of employee respondents, 90%, worked at Fast Fix Workshop for more than a year. Moreover, in the client survey 73.3% were repeat customers and 26.7% were first time customers. Review the SWOT Analysis below for the analysed data represented in a SWOT analysis.

*Table 2: Environmental Scan and SWOT Analysis*

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p><i>Orienting factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-90% of employees have been employed at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. for more than a year</li> <li>-100% of workers agree that they have the requisite knowledge, skills and capacity to perform the job</li> <li>-100% of clients agree that the workers are knowledgeable about their jobs</li> </ul>	<p><i>Orienting Factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of communication processes among workers</li> <li>- Workers are disgruntled with immobility and stagnation</li> <li>- 30% of clients are not pleased after conducting business with Fast Fix Workshop Inc.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Instructional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-90% of employees strongly agree that they are clear on the steps to take after a job is finished</li> <li>-Company focuses on producing quality products and services at affordable prices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Instructional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No structure in place for smooth transition of jobs interdepartmentally</li> <li>-35% of workers disagree that they are informed of jobs and incoming jobs to their departments in a timely manner</li> <li>-75% of employees disagree that there is good communication among people in different departments in the company</li> </ul>
<p><i>Transfer factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-100% of workers are motivated</li> <li>-85% of workers agree that they are given sufficient responsibilities</li> <li>-100% of workers agree that incentives would affect their work performance</li> </ul>	<p><i>Transfer factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Employees feel as though they are given very little incentives</li> <li>-85% agree that there is a no current and functioning job procedure to complete work</li> </ul>

<p>-100% of workers agree that the necessary resources are available for them to carry out their duties</p>	
<p><i>Environmental factors</i></p> <p>-100% of workers agree that the workplace follows Health and Safety guidelines</p>	<p><i>Environmental factors</i></p> <p>-There is a bureaucratic process to receive financial assistance for small business owners</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>
<p><i>Orienting factors</i></p> <p>-There are several niche markets</p> <p>-Diversified products and services</p>	<p><i>Orienting factors</i></p> <p>100% of workers note that there are no communication systems to support performance or job progress.</p> <p>-55% of clients disagree that they are given frequent updates regarding their vehicle or appliance.</p>
<p><i>Instructional factors</i></p> <p>-Increase communication and clarity in job processes and workflow</p>	<p><i>Instructional factors</i></p> <p>-The lack of clear job processes and workflow</p>
<p><i>Transfer factors</i></p> <p>-Due to similar cultural nuances, a possibility exists of expanding the business regionally</p>	<p><i>Transfer factors</i></p> <p>-50% of workers are not satisfied with the quality of communication in the company.</p>
<p><i>Environmental factors</i></p> <p>-Societal expectations: As a small business, the company is expected to support local relative to the purchasing of raw materials and employment</p>	<p><i>Environmental factors</i></p> <p>-75% of workers disagree that there is good communication among departments</p> <p>-65% of clients disagree that they receive communication from Fast Fix in a timely manner</p> <p>-Only 14% of customers receive their products or services at the discussed time</p>

## **Data Collection**

### **Survey Tools**

#### *Document Review/ Extant data*

According to Watkins, Meiers and Visser (2012) document review provides useful information that can be used to make informed decisions. The information gathered via documents at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. were used to give background information on the company to give a summary of what is being experienced as well as basic information pertaining to job flow and processes. Additionally the document review assisted in the creation of questions for the interview and surveys as well as the observation checklist.

#### *Observation*

Observation is a way of gathering data by watching behavior, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting (Evaluation Briefs, 2018). The use of observation as a data collection method is critical for the team in an effort to understand the ongoing communication processes at Fast Fix Workshop Inc and to gain first hand insight into the interdepartmental interactions as it relates to the movement of jobs and the processes employed. The observation focused primarily on meticulously recording the workflow processes employees used on a daily basis to move new and existing jobs through the relevant departments and into the hands of clients. It also recorded the extent to which employees documented these processes. Trained observers conducted this observation utilizing the observation checklist which can be found in Appendix D.

According to Evaluation Briefs, (2018), "Observations can also be either direct or indirect. Direct observation is when you watch interactions, processes, or behaviors as they occur on the other hand, indirect observations are when you watch the results of interactions,

processes, or behaviors”. Because of the nature of the business, the needs assessment team employed a bit of both as an observation tactic over the course of one week. We were able to track processes involving the acceptance of new jobs and follow older jobs all the way through to customer handover.

### *Interview*

Interview method of data collection in Research. (2018) contends that, the main purpose of an interview as a tool of data collection, is to gather data extensively and intensively, as the objectives of the interview may be exchange of ideas and experiences, eliciting information pertaining to a very wide range of data in which the interviewee may wish to rehearse his past, define his present and canvass his future possibilities.

This was indeed the case with Fast Fix Workshop Inc. An in depth interview was conducted with Gary Hinds, manager and owner, so as to acquire the details pertinent not only to the existence of the business in the current economic and technological climate, but the operations and daily practices that contribute to the established business culture. He was able to give a thorough explanation of the depth of services provided, general client feedback, as well as felt and desired business performance.

### *Survey*

Survey is defined as the act of examining a process or questioning a selected sample of individuals to obtain data about a service, product, or process (Tague, 2005). According to Tague, (2005) “Data collection surveys collect information from a targeted group of people about their opinions, behavior, or knowledge.” Advanced Solutions Experts sought to gather data from the employees of Fast Fix Workshop Inc to better understand the day to day intricacies of their job, the processes they employ and their overall communication levels interdepartmentally.

The survey was chosen as it was simple, it reached many individuals in a short time frame and it was an excellent tool for analysis of current performance levels. Watkins et al (2012) advance that surveys provide a useful tool for analysis.

Two surveys were created for the employees and the clients of Fast Fix Workshop Inc. The survey items were developed electronically, using the background information on the company as well as from the initial interview with the owner. The surveys were distributed electronically to employees and clients via the Human Resources department at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. Utilizing this tool we were able to gather data on both employee and client satisfaction within the organization and their general feelings and perceptions towards the products and services provided.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was completed using comparison of data from the organisational analyses and the environmental scan along with data collected via the data collection tools.

From the organisational analysis, the Fast Fix Workshop Inc. desires a 98% client satisfaction rate however based on the environmental scan, 30% of clients are not pleased after conducting business with the company. Moreover, the company seeks to sustain customer relationships and produce quality products delivered on time. The company is able to maintain customer relationships as 73.3% are repeat customers while only 26.7% are first time customers based on the survey. They are also able to produce quality products based on knowledge as seen where 100% of clients believe that staff are knowledgeable and 100% of the employees agree that they have the knowledge and skills to produce quality work. Similarly, in analysing the data based on the product logic, the company desires to have customer satisfaction by providing quality products at affordable prices and specialising in customisation. Thus, based on the



environmental scan 60% of customers are satisfied with the company's product. Here, these two logics are aligned as there is client satisfaction with the products offered.

However, there is a shortfall as it relates to the timely delivery of products and services. This is evident as 55% of clients disagree that they receive frequent updates about their vehicle or appliance. Likewise, 65% of clients disagree that they receive communication from Fast Fix in a timely manner. This is further advanced where only 25% of clients disagree that the company is dependable and reliable. Furthermore, based on observations at Fast Fix the evidence shows that there is lack of clarity as it relates to the workflow process which is reflected in the untimely delivery of products and services.

Using the process logic, all jobs have to be entered into the body work and paint section for processing. However, based on the data collected, 35% of employees disagree that the workplace informs them of jobs in a timely manner, while 75% of employees disagree that there is good communication between people in different departments in the company. Additionally, 85% of workers agree that work factors such as procedures have an affect on performance and so the lack of procedures have affected their performance. Moreover based on observations conducted, there is uncertainty as it relates to jobs received. There is no documentation that keeps track of the job received and the length of time it is expected to stay in a particular department. Here the internal logic is aligned with the process logic in terms of knowledge management and communication. 98% of communication is to be passed on relative to pertinent job information but only 35% of workers disagree that they are informed of jobs incoming to their department in a timely manner. In analysing the internal logic, it is expected that supervisors would inform employees of key decisions. This does not always occur as 35% of workers disagree that they were informed on the jobs in a timely manner. Similarly in the

observations, the timeline and specifications of jobs were not clearly outlined thus creating confusion to line workers.

The Workshop also intends to reward employees for their hard work, dedication and loyalty with bonuses and other incentives by compensating overtime pay, Christmas bonuses, paternity leave and other miscellaneous benefits as necessary. This is not aligned as the employees do not feel that they are given enough incentives as evidenced by the 100% response rate that incentives affect performance.

The company's return rate on vehicles and services is to be at a 98% rate. The current return rate is 14% based on the survey of clients and is also seen as a threat in the environmental scan which can eventually hamper business for Fast Fix Workshop.

Thus the point that Chevalier (2003) makes of placing a good employee in a bad system, the system wins everytime, is seen at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. where while the employees are knowledgeable and skilled at their job the environmental factors such as communication, lack of procedures and improper documentation are causing issues within the workplace that overflows to the clients.

## Gap Analysis

### *Confirmed Performance Gap*

*Table 3: Confirmed Performance Gap*

Desired Performance	Gap/Need	Actual Performance	Notes
98% client satisfaction	There is a need to improve client satisfaction by 68%	Only 30% of clients are pleased with the service provided.	
100% of	There is a need for	There is 25% of	

communication between people in different departments	75% of communication between people in different departments	communication between people in different departments	
Supervisors are expected to inform all employees in their department 100% of the time of key decisions and job information.	There is a need for supervisors to inform workers 35% of the time of key decisions and job information	Supervisors only inform workers 65% of the time of key decisions and job information	
100% of employees are to be knowledgeable and have the necessary skills to perform the work	No gap present	100% of workers agree that they have the knowledge and skills to perform the work	
100% of clients receive frequent updates on their products and services	There is a need for 55% of clients to receive frequent updates on their products and services	Only 45% of clients receive frequent updates on their products and services	
100% of clients receive communication from the company in a timely manner	There is a need for 65% of clients to receive communication from the company in a timely manner	Only 35% receive communication from the company in a timely manner	
100% of clients view the company as dependable and reliable	There is a need for 25% of clients to view the company as dependable and reliable	75% of clients view the company as dependable and reliable	
100% of incoming jobs and updates are to be documented	There is a 100% need to have documentation to keep track of jobs coming in and the length of time expected in a department.	0% documentation to keep track of jobs coming in and the length of time expected in a department.	

## **Relationship between Perceived Gaps and Confirmed Gaps**

Having confirmed the actual gaps, it would be remiss of the team not to reflect on and or highlight the relationship between perceived and confirmed gaps. Initially, it was believed that there were solely three perceived performance gaps which were as follows: a need for Fast Fix to improve products and services by 48%, a discrepancy to improve the flow of communication by 89% and a need to improve client satisfaction by 45%. In spite of this initial narrow view, through going through the process of conducting a needs assessment, grandiose needs were revealed that were far more detrimental to Fast Fix Workshop Inc. Firstly, it was noted that some gaps widened under the scope of needs assessment. For instance, whilst there remained a need for products and services to be delivered on time, the gap increased by 20%. With this need in particular, the needs assessment was able provide conditions to client satisfaction which resulted in secondary needs. Thus, it was revealed in the confirmed gaps that in order to close the discrepancy of client satisfaction, there is a need to update clients on their products and services, timely communicate and for the company to be viewed as dependable and reliable. Lastly, the needs assessment was able to reveal a novel need to be that of a 100% need to help with job tracking and estimated duration of times a job would spend in a department. Therefore, these realisations speak to the high utility of needs assessment for more precise and accurate information.

### *Six Cell Gap Analysis*

The gap analysis was further completed using Rothwell's Six Cell Gap Analysis as presented by Van Tiem et al (2012). The present and future gaps were identified as well as the positive, negative and neutral gaps for each present and future gaps based on the actual and desired performance. At present there are no present positive gaps, that is, current performance

that exceeds the desired performance. However there are negative gaps, which have the potential to cripple the business as well as future neutral gaps. Van Tiem et al (2012) maintain that “the greatest opportunity for performance improvement may occur when future neutral gaps exist because competitors tend to overlook them” (p.213). Therefore the neutral gap of having 100% knowledgeable and skilled staff and the future gap of that continuing is also worthy of attention as based on the data received from the analysis, employees do not receive incentives and so can be likely to leave the company for a better opportunity.

Table 4: Six-Cell Gap Analysis

Positive Gaps ↓	Neutral Gaps ↓	Negative Gaps ↓
Present Gaps→ ↓		
	100% of workers are knowledgeable and skilled	Client satisfaction - 30% client satisfaction rate.  Communication between departments.  Communication between supervisors and some workers.  Communication between the company and its clients.  Client rating of the company on reliability and dependability  Documentation of job processes
	100% of workers will continue to be knowledgeable and skilled	Clients will stop patronising the business.  Communication between departments will become non-existent.  Communication between the company and its clients will deteriorate further.  Rating of reliability and dependability can decrease.  Documentation of job processes will cease to exist.

↑  
Future Gaps→

*Prioritisation of Gaps*

Based on the six cell gap analysis, the gaps were prioritised using a priority matrix with a criticality scale to determine which gaps need urgent attention to meet the goals and the desired performance levels of Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

*Table 5: Priority Matrix*

	Low		Criticality Scale						High	
Performance Gap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Client satisfaction								•		
Communication with clients									•	
Communication between departments and employees										•
Documentation of jobs										•
Client rating of the company on reliability and dependability							•			

Using this criticality scale, the main performance gaps are the lack of communication between departments and employees as well as the lack of documentation of jobs within the departments. Thus, a cause analysis will be conducted to find out the root causes for these performance gaps.

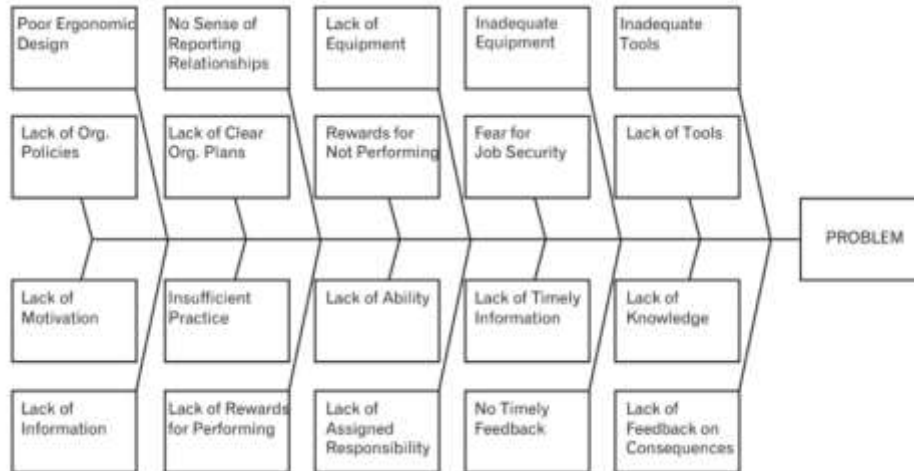


## Cause Analysis

“A cause is the ultimate reason or reasons for the existence of a human performance gap. It is a root determinant for a mismatch between what is and what should be” (Rothwell, 2005, p.149 ). Advanced Solutions Experts sought to analyze the root causes of the two gaps identified as priority through the use of our priority matrix. We engaged the individuals who were familiar with the problems identified; namely the supervisor, line workers and administration in an exercise of troubleshooting using the Ishikawa Fishbone Diagram below. This was conducted during a meeting where several hours were set aside for this activity. According to Rothwell, (2005) The Ishikawa Fishbone Diagram technique, (diagram 1) sometimes called the cause-and-effect diagram method, has been widely used in process improvement.

Participants first described the problems ‘Communication between departments and employees’ and ‘documentation of jobs’ in as much detail as possible. Next, they were asked to describe how each possible cause in the other boxes may be contributing to the problems at hand. After much debate and discussion the team was able to identify the root causes for each of the prioritized problems in cause analysis diagrams 2 and 3 below. Rothwell (2005) asserts that the basic idea is that all causes can be traced to people, policies, procedures, equipment and climate.

*Diagram 1: Ishikawa Fishbone Diagram*



*Note.* Taken from Rothwell (2005), a cause and effect diagram applied to human performance problems

*Diagram 2: Cause analysis on lack of communication*

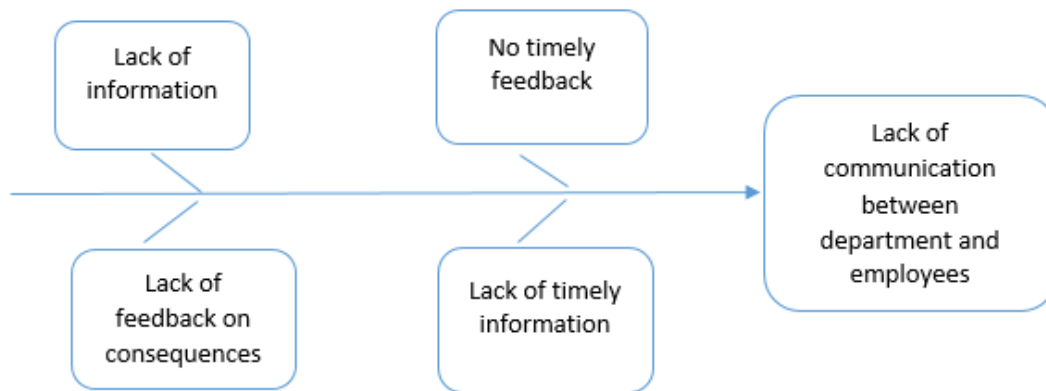
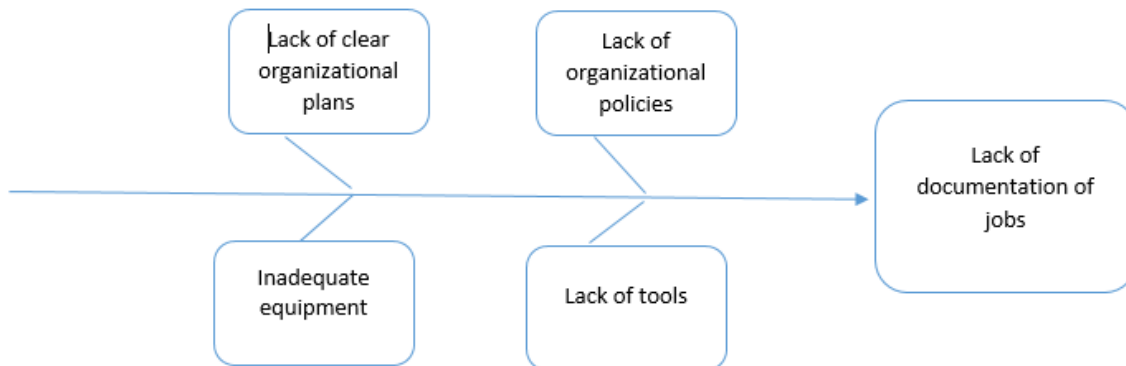


Diagram 3: Cause analysis on lack of documentation of jobs



According to Gilbert, (as cited by Van Tiem, 2012), there are three factors that influence performance: information, instrumentation and motivation. The cause analysis referenced above reflects causes within the environment that is accounting for the problems being experienced. The Behaviour Engineering Model advanced by Gilbert illustrates that factors may either be rooted in the environment or the individual. The root causes identified by the team in diagram 1 and 2 were then mapped onto Gilbert’s Behaviour Engineering Model.

Table 6: Gilbert’s Behaviour Engineering Model

<b>Information</b>	<b>Instrumentation</b>	<b>Motivation</b>
<i>Data</i>	<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Incentives</i>
Lack of information	Inadequate equipment	
No Timely Feedback	Lack of tools	
Lack of Feedback on consequences		
Lack of timely information		
Lack of clear organizational plans		

Lack of organizational policies		
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The team found that all of the above causes were rooted in the environment.

Environmental support includes those things that management provides that the performer needs to perform effectively and efficiently (Van Tiem et al, 2012). Emerging from the troubleshooting discourse it was realized that at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. there is no electronic documentation system that tracks the incoming and outgoing job timelines and job progress as well as no structured systems of communication that would further aid the flow of information and data within the Fast Fix work environment.

## **Results of the Assessment and Survey**

### **Findings- Raw data results**

The findings display the raw data results from the interview, the surveys as well as the observations checklist. The raw data results are located in Appendix E.

## **Overall Assessment**

### **Explanation on the findings**

The explanation on the findings will give information relative to the objectives of the needs assessment as well linkages to the gap and cause analysis.

The specific objectives of the needs assessment were to:

1. Assess the desired and current levels of communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

The desired levels of communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. are to have 100% communication among the departments and employees. At present there is only a 25% level of communication among departments. Based on the gap analysis, this represents a 75% gap in performance and was seen as pertinent to the daily operations of the company as shown via the cause analysis using the criticality scale to prioritise the gaps. This lack of communication in the daily operations at the company has also affected client communication as 55% of clients disagree that they are given frequent updates regarding their vehicle or appliance and 65% disagree that they receive communication from Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

Taking the cause analysis into consideration, communication levels have not reached the desired level as there is lack of timely information or lack of information within the company as well as no timely feedback or no feedback on the consequences of job processes. This is evidenced as 50% of employees are not satisfied with communication levels in the company and 90% agree that lack of information affects the job performance.

2. Identify the gaps present among the target audience in their use of existing communication systems.

At present there is no effective communication system at Fast Fix Workshop. This was seen during the observations and was further noted in the gap and cause analysis. The gap analysis revealed that there are inconsistencies with communication at the company where there is 100% need to develop a communication system and the cause analysis further corroborated these inconsistencies as there is a lack of timely information and feedback. This is also backed up by the 100% response rate of employees who

confirmed that there is no communication system in the company. This was also substantiated by qualitative responses of employees as 100% indicated that meetings, staff briefings or technological tools are needed to improve communication at the company. The non communication within Fast Fix has also affected client communication as only 35% of clients receive communication in a timely manner and only 45% of clients receive frequent updates on their products and services. This is supported in the cause analysis as one of the causes for lack of communication is lack of timely feedback.

3. Assess the workflow and processes employed at Fast Fix Workshop Inc..

Based on the observations, there is no clear procedure in place for proper prioritization, scheduling and appropriating timelines to new or existing jobs. There is no authorization of timelines and insufficient tracking of job timelines interdepartmentally resulting in customer delays. From the survey 100% of employees indicated that there was no system set up to monitor the flow of communication and the gap analysis confirmed this. Data results showed that there is only 25% interdepartmental communication and 0% documentation to keep track of jobs coming in and the length of time expected in a department. Based on the cause analysis this is due to lack of clear organisational policies and plans, inadequate equipment and lack of tools to effectively document the processes.

4. Prioritise the needs of the organisation as it relates to closing the performance gap.

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. needs to substantially improve their communication within the company as well as to its clients. Using the criticality scale in the gap

prioritization, there is an urgent need to improve the communication between departments and employees as well as proper documentation of job processes and job flows. Although the other gaps are critical and surround the satisfaction and communication of clients, the priority is given to communication and documentation within the company as once these performance gaps are closed and are closer to the desired levels, the effect would be seen among client satisfaction.

5. Assess the level of satisfaction by clients.

Fast Fix Workshop Inc. aims to have a 100% level of satisfaction among their clients base. From the survey results, 33.3% of males are satisfied with the service given by Fast Fix while 20% of females are satisfied. This means that there is only a 53.3% level of satisfaction by the clients thus an existing gap of 46.7% that are not satisfied with the service of Fast Fix Workshop. Similarly, 46.6% of males are satisfied with the products sold while 33.3% of females are satisfied. While they both combined for 79.9% satisfaction rate, there is still a gap of 20% relative to the satisfaction level of clients which is also compounded by an 85% rate of non communication from the company.

Additionally, clients when surveyed agreed with a 100% response rate that employees were knowledgeable and skilled at their job as evidenced by the 73.3% of repeat customers but at least 20% of clients would not recommend Fast Fix Workshop Inc. to family and friends.

6. Recommend the best course of action to meet the desired performance levels.

The best course of action, based on the performance gaps would be to implement a communication system relative to a communication network. Additionally, an electronic performance support system will be introduced as well as the implementation of a strategic plan. These would target all existing gaps and related causes within the company and assist with improving performance at Fast Fix which will then have a ripple effect with its client base and thus improve overall satisfaction.

### **Proposed Solution**

Presently at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. there is a 75% lack of communication between departments and employees as well as 0% documentation of jobs to keep track of incoming jobs and the expected length of time in each department. This gap is due to a lack of information and or timely feedback as well as unclear organisational plans. This results in the lack of adequate information to clients which results in client dissatisfaction and can have repercussions for the company in losing their client base.

After an extensive needs assessment, the proposed solutions to Fast Fix Workshop to improve communication problems, are centred around organisational communication interventions, organisational design and development and performance support interventions. These will include communication networks, an electronic performance support system and the creation of a strategic plan.

The review of findings points specifically to a multiplicity of solutions. Therefore, to understand why these solutions were chosen, Advanced Solutions Experts employed a Multicriteria Analysis Table. According to Watkins et al., (2012), the Multicriteria Analysis table provides quantitative information that is useful in objectively assessing, weighing different



options and avoiding potential selection biases that are likely to occur when selecting a solution. To guide the process, the team has insisted on a high level of input from Fast Fix Workshop Inc. and has included Gary Hinds and other key stakeholders into the process so that a general consensus of these solutions could be made. Fast Fix Workshop Inc. along with Advanced Solutions Experts have deliberated and have decided that five criteria would assess each alternative solution which include the solution's ability to accomplish desired outcomes, client satisfaction, its feasibility, its ability to produce results within six months and long-term costs. The table's results reveal a high level of functionality within each solution. See the Multicriteria Analysis Table below for the results of the proposed solutions.

**Comparison of Alternatives for Improving Communication at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.**

Ratings: 1-2 = very low, 3-4=low, 5-6 = medium, 7-8 = high, 9-10 = very high

	<b>Criterion 1:</b> Ability to accomplish desired outcomes	<b>Criterion 2:</b> Client satisfaction	<b>Criterion 3:</b> Feasibility	<b>Criterion 4:</b> Expected results within six months	<b>Criterion 5:</b> Cost of the activity overtime	Sum of weighted ratings
Weights	.25	.20	.20	.20	.15	

<b>Alternative solution 1</b> Implement a communication network	9 x .25= <b>2.25</b>	8 x .2= <b>1.6</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	10 x .15= <b>1.5</b>	8.95
<b>Alternative solution 2</b> Implementing an Electronic Performance Support System	9 x .25= <b>2.25</b>	8 x .2= <b>1.6</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	8 x .2= <b>1.6</b>	5 x .15= <b>0.75</b>	8
<b>Alternative solution 3</b> Implementing a strategic plan	8 x .25= <b>2</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	9 x .2= <b>1.8</b>	7 x .15= <b>1.05</b>	8.45

To further appreciate the impact the solutions will have on closing the gaps, Stefaniak (2021) suggested that a cost analysis consequence be used so that an evaluation and analysis of costs as it relates to returns on investments and other benefits and consequences can be provided. Moreover, if this step is ignored, Kaufman and Watkins (1996) cautioned that it could be unrewarding and costly for an organisation. The cost analysis consequence table used by Advanced Solutions Experts shows in each criteria, negative intangible costs that could prevail if the solution is ignored. The table suggests that the potential costs of implementing the interventions is of far more significant value to the organisation than the intangible costs that could occur. Please see the table below for the findings of the cost analysis consequence.

	<b>Potential Costs Associated with not Addressing the Solution</b>	<b>Potential Costs Associated with Addressing the Solution</b>
<b>Alternative solution 1</b>  Implement a communication network	Performers' dissatisfaction and feeling as though they are not part of the team, delayed jobs, long time to solve issues due to lack of collaboration	Physical resources and materials such as stationery (US 150.00) + Training costs (US \$150 per session) * 6 sessions + other intangible costs such as Senior Management buy-in  <b>Estimated \$US 1,050</b>

	<p><b>Intangible costs</b></p>	
<p><b>Alternative solution 2</b>  Implementing an Electronic Performance Support System</p>	<p>Disgruntled and dissatisfied customers and performers, employees' feeling as though there are not part of the team, little to no business referrals from customers or returning first time customers</p> <p><b>Intangible costs</b></p>	<p>Training costs to use system (US\$500) * 12 sessions + Application and software design and development: alpha and beta testing, user interface evaluation (US 12,510) + Transfer of business information such as company credentials: logos, desired information such as timelines, departments etc. (US 8,500) + Intangible costs such as employee and customer satisfaction, increased interdepartmental sharing and collaboration between employees, more client referrals</p> <p><b>Estimated \$US 27, 010</b></p>

<p><b>Alternative solution 3</b></p> <p>Implement a strategic plan</p>	<p>Performers are unaware of the company’s vision and mission. There are no shared goals or visions.</p> <p>Supervisors do not find documenting procedures and information to be a useful and employees nor supervisors are held accountable for their actions</p> <p><b>Intangible costs</b></p>	<p>\$US 1000 per 8 training sessions + Senior management buy in=</p> <p><b>Estimated \$US 8,000</b></p>
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**Supporting evidence for solution**

**Organisational Communication Intervention**

*Communication networks- System Intervention*

There will be the implementation of a system intervention via monthly staff meetings at Fast Fix Workshop that will assist to address the 75% performance gap of lack of communication between employees and departments. Van Tiem et al (2012) maintain that system interventions change the amount and frequency of how information is disseminated. At present there are no staff meetings or briefings and based on the findings of the survey, 100% of

employees indicated that staff meetings or staff briefings would help with the flow of information and would improve communication. The staff meetings will have every department in attendance where the supervisor will give an update pertaining to that department and individuals will have the opportunity to ask questions for further clarification. Rothwell (2005) highlights that when performers lack information they do not function competently and this can be solved through staff meetings. Additionally, departments will meet for briefings at the beginning of each week to ensure all incoming and completed jobs are accounted for and if needed will have emergency briefings if an emergency occur. The briefings will also serve as an opportunity to provide feedback on ongoing or completed jobs so that employees are aware of their efforts on the job completion or if work needs to be corrected. Rothwell (2005) asserts that providing feedback lets employees know how they are doing, provides clarity and corrects mistakes that lead to improvement. Gainor (n.d) acknowledges that staff meetings are important for motivation enhancement as feedback to employees lets them know they are performing well. Likewise Boiser (2020) contends that staff meetings are a medium for feedback and constant improvement. These meetings will therefore not only help to reduce the performance gap but also encourage employees to be more involved in the process as based on the survey, they felt like their opinions were neglected by supervisors.

### **Performance Support Intervention**

#### *Electronic performance support system*

An electronic performance support system (EPPS) is software that provides integrated, on demand access to information, advice, learning experiences and tools to enable a high level of job performance with a minimum of training and support from other people (Langdon, D. G., Whiteside, K. S., & McKenna, M. M.,1999). Langdon et al., (1999), advance that instead of

concentrating on training individuals to perform a given task, the implementation of an EPPS supports the performer in accomplishing the task with information, tools, reminders and other forms of support. While no deficiencies were identified in employees' knowledgeability and skills in performing their jobs, the gaps point to improper communication channels among departments, which resulted in large job delays and customer dissatisfaction.

In an effort to close this gap Advanced Solutions Experts proposes the development and implementation of the Fast Update App. This App's primary purpose is to record and track all jobs from reception to delivery and to provide a viable communication channel within and among departments. It will be tailored to the specific needs of Fast Fix Workshop Inc. so that the workflow process becomes automated. The intention is to keep personnel informed by sending notifications in real time about new jobs, location of jobs, timelines on jobs, percentage completion of jobs, authorization of jobs, materials used for the job, or any other pertinent information regarding jobs received. The app will also track employees that are assigned to particular jobs so that it is clear who is responsible for which task.

Furthermore, it will assist in task structuring where the activities related to the job or task is accurately represented and appropriately sequenced so that the task is successfully accomplished (Langdon et al., 1999). The idea here is to optimize the work process with the primary aim of improving communication performance.

One of the foremost advantages of an automated system like what we are proposing is that groups will only be notified of their own tasks as is necessary and not everyone will be flooded with information they do not need. Langdon et al., (1999), asserts that:

Because an EPSS is incorporated into the work process, it enables individuals to get up to speed quickly and work more efficiently. It manages complexity and workflow for the

user, and it is capable of supporting diverse working styles while at the same time enabling users to share knowledge (p. 1420).

The proposed EPSS is also a mechanism through which employees can share information among themselves, with supervisors, administration and management. In this way both the work and the worker are positively affected. Closing the performance gap that accounts for 75% of communication deficits interdepartmentally using this intervention, will provide Fast Fix Workshop Inc. with the tools they need to 'improve the workflow and has the potential to provide a significant return on investment' Langdon et al., (1999, p. 1434).

## **Organisation Design and Development Intervention**

### *Strategic Planning*

Presently at Fast Fix Workshop Inc. there are no recorded organisational goals from management to state that there should be documentation of incoming jobs to be completed and workflow processes. Rothwell (2005) asserts that if managers have not communicated or clarified how the organisation is to function, then employees will have a difficult time in understanding or knowing what to do. Therefore to close this gap a strategic vision will be implemented so that both management and employees are unified in their various tasks, roles and the future of the company. Rothwell (2005) notes that clarifying organisational plans may include establishing a strategic plan. Similarly as it relates to strategic planning, Van tiem et al (2012) cultivated that strategic planning is a solution based on organisational pro-action which affords an organisation the opportunity to think about its future and plan creatively by actioning its objectives with an understanding of the influences of environmental factors in mind. Thus,



the development of the strategic plan will alleviate the causes of lack of organisational policies and plans as it relates to the performance gap of no documentation.

The strategic plan will be developed with the assistance of the employees so that they support the plan and buy-in to its utility. The strategic plan will be developed for a five year duration and will take into account the results of the report from the needs assessment relative to the organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Van Tiem et al (2012) note that information critical to the strategic planning process can be gathered by completing a SWOT analysis. Additionally, the strategic plan will address the job processes of departments and the tools to be used to carry out their tasks. As Van Tiem et al (2012) acknowledge, strategic planning provides direction and focus. Therefore, the inclusion of the use of the EPSS, Fast Update App will be included so that employees know that it is the required method of job documentation.

Consequently, Van tiem et al (2012) stated that it fosters employees' confidence and commitment to the organisation. Strategic planning stems from this approach and it refers to defining the organisation's direction to be more purposeful as it relates to engaging in work processes and other organisational activities with the company's strategic vision and plan in mind (Van tiem et al., 2012). This is a valid solution for Fast Fix Workshop Inc. as it would encourage more formal documentation of work procedures.

According to Espy (1986) strategic planning offers several benefits in organisations. It allows a business to create a future. By doing this, leaders are able to plan and delve into their future by analysing and weighing pros and cons of achieving their objectives (Espy, 1986). It also encourages team building by allowing other members in the organisation to share their ideas

as each person works together toward common goals (Espy, 1986). Espy (1986) warned though that it may be difficult to develop and action plans and that challenges are likely to arise with this solution such as other employees viewing it as a mundane task and so on. Despite this view, it was recommended that with persistence and courage, it could be a worthwhile and effective solution (Espy, 1986).

### **Conclusion**

Fast Fix Workshop Inc., a privately owned automobile repair and restoration company owned and managed by Gary Hinds solicited the help of Advanced Solutions Experts to conduct a needs assessment on their behalf. His aim was to find ways to curb existing problems in production and employee complaints about job related issues. The team successfully completed a thorough needs assessment which confirmed that major gaps existed with communication interdepartmentally and with respect to documentation of jobs. We were able to determine the root causes of these existing gaps and address them by recommending viable solutions best suited to the needs of the organization.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Interview Questions**

Customer logic:

1. How does your company encourage life-long customers?
2. What methods do you use to attract customers?
3. How does your organisation determine whether it is attracting and retaining customers as intended and whether the process is effective?

Product logic:

1. How are you satisfying customers' needs?
2. What makes your products or services stand out?
3. What messages does your company send to customers in order to attract and appeal to their needs?
4. What is the company's reputation with its customers?
5. How does the company determine whether its products and services appeal to customers?

Process logic:

1. How do you provide new products and services?
2. How does the company turn raw materials into products and services delivered to the customer?
3. What are five to seven events where departments have to work cross functionally?
  - 3b. What groups participate in the process?
4. Does your company provide post-sale support to customers? In what ways?
5. How does your company determine how well its process is working?

Internal Logic:

1. What does the organization chart look like? Why is it structured this way?

2. What are five to seven key decisions most people in your organization have to make every day? How do they get the information they need to make those decisions?
3. What are the key metrics your organization looks at to determine how well its Internal Logic is working?

## Appendix B

### Survey Items- Staff

#### Section 1 of 4

#### Needs Assessment on Communication in the Workplace

This survey is being conducted as a needs assessment on communication at your workplace. All information gathered will be kept in the strictest confidence.

#### Section 2 of 4

#### Personal Information

This section collects employees' demographics

1. What is your gender?

Male            Female

2. How long have you been working at this organisation?

Less than a year

One to five years

Six to 10 years

11 to 15 years

16 to 19 years

3. From the list below, select your job title/ description

Painter

Body work technician

Welder

General worker

Carpenter



Electrician

Office Assistant/ Secretary

Human Resource Manager

Draftsman

Accountant

4. Select your department

Body work department

General fabrication

Bus and body work

Refrigeration and air conditioning

Office staff

**Section 3 of 4**

**Communication and Work Processes**

Read each statement carefully. Decide whether you are strongly in agreement with the statement, agree, are neutral, disagree or strongly disagree by selecting the corresponding box.

1. My workplace informs me on jobs in my department as well as impending jobs to my department in a timely manner.
2. There is good communication between people in different departments of the company.
3. Senior management regularly updates me on what is happening with jobs in the company.
4. I am very satisfied with the quality of communication in the company.
5. My organisation uses a communication system where the job progress is communicated.  
This system is frequently monitored by supervisors.
6. I am clear on the steps I should take when a job is finished in my department.

7. What do you think is needed to improve the flow of information at the company?

#### **Section 4 of 4**

#### **Environmental and Individual Factors**

Environmental and individual factors account for the lack of performance in reaching the desired performance levels.

8. Workplace factors can account for varying levels of productivity. The below factors affect the level of my performance in carrying out my duties? (resources, information, incentives)
9. Work factors can account for varying levels of productivity. The below factors affect the level of my performance in carrying out my duties. (procedure, responsibilities, health and safety).
10. Worker factors can account for varying levels of performance. The below factors affect the level of my performance in carrying out my duties. (Knowledge and skill, capacity, motivation).

## Appendix C

### Survey Items- Clients

#### Section 1 of 5

#### Needs Assessment on Client Satisfaction and Communication

This survey is being conducted as a needs assessment on client satisfaction and communication on Fast Fix Workshop Inc. All information gathered will be kept in the strictest confidence.

#### Section 2 of 5

#### Personal Information

This section collects clients' demographics

Gender

Male          Female

How long have you been a client of Fast Fix Workshop Inc?

Less than 1 year          1- 5 years          6- 10 years

11-15 years          16- 19 years

What type of client are you?

1st time customer

Repeat customer

### **Section 3 of 5**

#### **Client Satisfaction**

This section gauges the clients' level of satisfaction with Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

**Using the Likert scale, clients will answer the following items based on their agreement level of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.**

1. I am satisfied with the service given by Fast Fix Workshop Inc.
2. I am satisfied with the products sold by Fast Fic Workshop Inc.
3. I believe that the company is reliable and dependable.
4. I believe the employees are knowledgeable about their job.
5. I am normally pleased after conducting business with Fast Fix Workshop
6. I would conduct business with Fast Fix Worksop in the future.
7. I would recommend Fast Fix Workshop to my family and friends.

### **Section 4 of 5**

#### **Client Communication with Fast Fix Workshop**

This section gauges the communication levels between clients and employees of Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

**Using the Likert scale, clients will answer the following items based on their agreement level of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.**

8. I receive communication from Fast Fix Workshop Inc. in a timely manner.
9. I am given frequent updates regarding my vehicle or appliance.

10. I am informed about specials or discounts offered at Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

## **Section 5 of 5**

### **Clients' Views**

This section allows clients to note any additional information regarding Fast Fix Workshop Inc.

11. What is your main complaint or satisfaction regarding Fast Fix Workshop?

## Appendix D

### Observation Checklist

General Information		
Date of Observation: _____		
Department: _____		
# Employees present: _____		
No.	Question	Response Category
Work Process/Flow New Jobs		
1.	Is the job identified, classified and documented?	<b>Yes      No</b>
2.	Who completed the above task?	<b>Line Worker Supervisor Admin</b>
3.	Was a detailed maintenance/job order completed?	<b>Yes      No</b>
4.	Who completed the above task?	<b>Line Worker Supervisor Admin</b>
5.	Who was the completed job order sent to next?	<b>Line Worker Supervisor Admin</b>
6.	Was the job order prioritized and scheduled?	<b>Yes      No</b>
7.	Was the job authorized?	<b>Yes      No</b>
8.	Was the job assigned to the required department?	<b>Yes      No</b>
9.	Was a timeline assigned to the job?	<b>Yes      No</b>
10.	Was the timeline communicated to the required department/s?	<b>Yes      No</b>
11.	Was the timeline authorized?	<b>Yes      No</b>

12.	Was there a final sign-off on the newly accepted job?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
13.	Are all departments aware of the new job received?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Work Process/Flow Existing Jobs</b>			
14.	Was a timeline made available for the completion of this job?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
15.	Is this job on schedule?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
16.	Is this job in the correct department?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
17.	Was this job given supervisor authorization?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
18.	Will this job be delivered on time?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
19.	Is the customer aware of any possible delays?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
20.	Are completed jobs analyzed and closed?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

## Appendix E

### Findings-Raw Data Results

#### *E.1 - Responses from Interview*

##### Customer Logic

Q: How does your company encourage life-long customers?

A: We try to be very professional and business-like. We also place emphasis on ensuring that our products are of high quality and we try to deliver on time.

Q: What methods do you use to attract customers?

A: We do not really advertise. We rely on word of mouth as well as our Sales Representative to inform potential customers of our products and services.

Q: How does your organisation determine whether it is attracting and retaining customers as intended and whether the process is effective?

A: We look at the amount of quotations that potential customers request and the number of those jobs that we actually receive.

##### Product logic:

Q: How are you satisfying customers' needs?

A: We are the only company in Barbados that fabricates bus bodies so we have dominated the market. In addition, we set ourselves apart because we do customisations and configurations to suit our customers' needs.

Q: What makes your products or services stand out?

A: We deliver high quality products and services at affordable prices.

Q: What messages does your company send to customers in order to attract and appeal to their needs?



A: We see everyone as a potential customer. As such, we hire locals and buy local so that more locals could interact with us.

Q: What is the company's reputation with its customers?

A: This is two-sided. We have a great relationship with a certain group of customers.

Unfortunately, there may be some who may be disgruntled because of our delivery of their product or service.

Q: How does the company determine whether its products and services appeal to customers?

A: Usually by customers' reviews and referrals and their response to certain jobs such as customisations.

Process logic:

Q: How do you provide new products and services?

A: We are constantly on the lookout for ways to improve our products and services. We search for ways to reduce costs for customers whilst still maintaining quality. We are open to new ideas. When hiring we look for persons who project creativity and who have innovative ideas.

Q: How does the company turn raw materials into products and services delivered to the customer?

A: We go through a process of cutting, bending and welding material and joining them together to deliver a finished piece.

Q: What are five to seven events where departments have to work cross functionally? What groups participate in the process?

A: With every job that goes into the workshop, there tends to be an overlap of jobs especially in the bodywork section and the paint shop. Other areas of cross functional work include the building of a bus body which would entail general fabrication, bus and body work section and

the paint shop. A rear bumper repair includes the bus and body work section and the paintshop section.

Q: Does your company provide post-sale support to customers? In what ways?

A: Yes, we provide warranties. Also, if customers report any issues, we ask them to return the vehicle so that we can have a further look.

Q: How does your company determine how well its process is working?

A: We look at how timely we can deliver the product and service as well as feedback from clients.

Internal Logic:

Q: What does the organization chart look like? Why is it structured this way?

A: The organization chart moves upward to downward from the Managing Director, Workshop Foreman, Supervisors, Administration and Office Staff and Skilled Line Workers. It is structured this way because it is easier to operate. It distinctly shows the chain of command and who reports to whom.

Q: What are five to seven key decisions most people in your organization have to make every day? How do they get the information they need to make those decisions?

A: Key decisions include who are the right personnel for the job and what are the right materials to use. This information is passed down from supervisors. Employees can make suggestions but must consult with supervisors and clients.

Q: What are the key metrics your organization looks at to determine how well its Internal Logic is working?

A: We look at how fast we can deliver.

*E.2 - Survey Results- Needs Assessment on Communication in the Workplace*

Link for the survey results- [Communication in the Workplace](#)

Link for spreadsheet with responses-

[Needs Assessment on Communication in the Workplace \(Responses\)](#)

*E 3. - Survey Results- Needs Assessment on Client Satisfaction and Communication*

Link to Survey Results- [Survey Results -Client Satisfaction & Communication](#)

Link to Survey Responses- [Survey Responses](#)

*E.4 - Observation Checklist Results*

General Information		
Date of Observation: _____		
Department: _____		
# Employees present: _____		
No.	Question	Response Category
Work Process/Flow New Jobs		
2.	Is the job identified, classified and documented?	Yes No
2.	Who completed the above task?	Line Worker Supervisor Admin
3.	Was a detailed maintenance/job order completed?	Yes No
4.	Who completed the above task?	Line Worker Supervisor Admin
5.	Who was the completed job order sent to next?	Line Worker Supervisor Admin
6.	Was the job order prioritized and scheduled?	Yes No
7.	Was the job authorized?	Yes No
8.	Was the job assigned to the required department?	Yes No
9.	Was a timeline assigned to the job?	Yes No
10.	Was the timeline communicated to the required department/s?	Yes No
11.	Was the timeline authorized?	Yes No
12.	Was there a final sign-off on the newly accepted job?	Yes No
13.	Are all departments aware of the new job received?	Yes No

Work Process/Flow Existing Jobs		
14.	Was a timeline made available for the completion of this job?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15.	Is this job on schedule?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16.	Is this job in the correct department?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Was this job given supervisor authorization?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Will this job be delivered on time?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19.	Is the customer aware of any possible delays?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20.	Are completed jobs analyzed and closed?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

### *Anecdotal notes*

After a week of overt observations, it was realized that although jobs are identified, classified and documented in the first instance the movement of those jobs through the departments were oftentimes met with a variety of hurdles. Workflow processes are stagnated when receiving departments have no knowledge of the expected timelines on requested jobs and are not fully aware of the initial job schedule or expected delivery times to clients.

Although jobs were authorized by supervisors of the receiving departments line workers were left in the dark as to the timelines or deadlines they were dealing with, especially if there were jobs already occupying their attention. The lines of communication seemed to not be focused and clear from supervisors to line workers. There is no documentation generation that keeps track of data that keeps it updated relative to the addition of new jobs. Therefore there is a lack of clarity related to how long a job is expected to stay in one particular department. Since most jobs pass through the bodywork and paint department, this lack of proper communication severely impedes the flow of work causing a backlog and subsequent delays.

There seemed to be insufficient planning of the workflow that dictates a clear, well prepared plan. This is visible in the confusion that exists among line workers and supervisors on the progress of particular jobs.