

EDIS 7072: Performance Improvement 3 Credit Hours

Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education Fall, 2016

August 23 – December 6

Meeting Schedule: asynchronous online; some synchronous guest talks may be scheduled

**Instructor**

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**Description**

Most instructional designers end up designing solutions to human performance gaps that vary in nature or cause – not all are due to lack of knowledge or skills and therefore *instructional* solutions are not always optimal or can fail to impact performance. In this class, we will learn how to conduct a gap analysis to identify an actual performance problem, conduct a root cause analysis in conjunction with a needs assessment to determine the specific barriers and causes, develop solutions or interventions designed to improve the identified performance gaps, and develop a robust evaluation plan to determine if the intervention works. This skill set is commonly used in corporate, government, health, military, and non-profit industries and is growing in application in K-12.

**Learning Objectives**

Develop a robust mental model of performance improvement

* Describe the relationship between instructional design and performance improvement
* Explore and discuss the application of performance improvement in real-world examples from diverse settings and content domains such as government, K-12, higher education, industry, non-profits and healthcare
* Analyze a performance system using the schema of common barriers to performance
* Develop a representational model of the range of performance support solutions for various types of performance gaps

Application of Performance Improvement

* Clearly define a performance problem space, including a range of specific performance gaps (not just knowledge/skills), using needs assessment – specifically gap analysis
* Determine the actual cause(s) for the performance problem using root cause analysis
* Write a performance plan that includes clear, specific, and measurable performance objectives, aligns individual performance objectives with organizational performance objectives, and articulates measures of effectiveness for each of these that can then be tracked and evaluated over time
* Recommend solutions or interventions to address the gap, basing the recommendations in data gathered from the gap analysis and needs assessment
* Select one solution or intervention to address using clearly defined criteria for selection and focus
* Create a solution or intervention as appropriate to the need you have identified
  + The shape of this will vary depending on what type of need you identify and what type of intervention you recommend and choose to address. Examples of types of products you might create for each type of intervention are provided under activities.
* Write an evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of your intervention and develop or adapt instruments for implementation
* Construct of a “PI Toolbox” in which you gather various tools and instruments presented in class and through readings for quick future access

**Instructional Methods**

Class sessions will be online via Collab with weekly readings, videos, and other materials as appropriate. There will be weekly discussions throughout the course, starting with some case study analyses then moving into discussion of your readings and applications of the principles and tools in the readings. Please read the section on Participation for further details. A large portion of the class will be project-based application and peer review and feedback, so you will be expected to devote time to your readings, working on your project, participating in discussions, and providing feedback to your classmates.

**Course Texts & Resources**

*Required*

Watkins, R. (2007). *Performance by design: The systematic selection, design, and development of performance technologies that produce useful results.* Amherst, MA: HRD Press.

Mager, R. & Pipe, P. (1997). *Analyzing performance problems: Or, you really oughta wanna – How to figure out why people aren’t doing what they should be, and what to do about it*, 3rd ed. Atlanta, GA: Center for Effective Performance.

*Instructor-provided*

Several readings (chapters, articles, etc.) and instruments will be provided by the instructor throughout the course along with periodic videos. ***These are required readings for the course.*** Consult the schedule below and on Collab for all required reading each week.

*Recommended*

<http://eppic.biz/> - The Pursuing Performance Blog by Guy Wallace

<http://www.needsassessment.org/> - A substantial resource site on Needs Assessment by Ryan Watkins

*Related Journals & Organizations*

The following is a list of related journals and organizations that you may find useful throughout this course or beyond.

Journals:

Performance Improvement Quarterly

Performance Improvement Journal

Organizations / Associations:

International Society for Performance Improvement – [www.ispi.org](http://www.ispi.org)

Association for Talent Development (ATD, was ASTD) – [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org)

Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) – [www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)

Association of Educational Communications and Technology – Training & Performance Division – [www.aect.org](http://www.aect.org)

**Course Outline**

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|  | Week | Topic / Activity | Reading / Resources | What’s due |
| Foundations | 1  Aug. 23-29 | What is PI (or HPT)? | Foshay, Villachica, & Stepich – Cousins but Not Twins: PI and ID  Dessinger, Moseley, & Van Tiem – HPT model  Chevalier – Improving Workplace Performance  Guerra – PI as Litmus Test (very short)  Aziz - What’s In a Name?  Kaufman – Ends and Means | *Discussion: Means vs. Ends; PI toolbox* |
| 2  Aug. 30 – Sept. 5 | Performance Barriers, Part I | Watkins Ch. 1  *PI in …* public sector / government, healthcare  ***Handout:*** Performance Systems Barriers Handout and Job Aid | *Discussion: Case Study 1, Part 1 (includes videos); PI toolbox* |
| 3  Sept. 6-12 | Performance Barriers, Part II Performance barriers analysis – introductory analysis of a performance system using the common barriers identified in PI (Watkins readings) | Mager & Pipe Ch. 1 & 2  Addison & Witkuhn – HPT: The Culture Factor  Marquardt, Smith & Brooks – Managing change across process, technology, and culture  Tosti – Organizational culture  *PI in …* K-12 & Higher Ed | *Discussion:* Case Study 1, Part 2  *Assignment:* performance system analysis due end of Week 3 |
| 4  Sept. 13-19 | HPT Models and Overview of Theories and Figures | Chevalier – Updating the Behavior Engineering Model  Dessinger, Moseley & Van Tiem – HPT model (review)  Marker, et. al. – Spiral model  Kaufman – OEM model  *PI in …* industry, lessons learned in international projects | *Discussion: Case Study 2; PI toolbox* |
| Application | 5  Sept. 20-26 | **Assess and Analyze**   1. Identify a performance problem 2. Conduct a Needs Assessment including gap analyses and root cause analysis | Watkins Ch. 2 & 3  Kaufman – An Ounce of Good Assessment …  Mager & Pipe Ch. 4-6 – skim and consider  Carleton & Stevens – Cultural assessment | *Discussion:* Selection of topics; planning & prep for assessment and analysis  *Assignment:* work on your project – identify performance gap, conduct needs assmt and root cause analysis |
| 6  Sept. 27 – Oct. 3 | Mager & Pipe Ch. 7-12 – skim and consider  Watkins, Meiers, & Visser – p.207-213 | *Discussion:*  Assessment and analysis feedback  *Assignment:*  Assessment and analysis due end of Week 6 |
| 7  Oct. 4-10 | **Plan & Design**   1. Develop performance and organizational objectives and corresponding measures of effectiveness using Kaufman’s OEM model for this 2. Develop a performance support system (PSS) design to address the various barriers to performance   You should be prepared to present these two pieces, together, to an actual decision maker. | Watkins Ch. 4  Moore, Ellsworth & Kaufman – Objectives, Strategic Alignment  Watkins – Aligning HPT decisions top to bottom | *Discussion:* OEM and alternatives; feedback on performance plans and designs  *Assignment:*  Plan and PSS Design due end of Week 8 |
| 8  Oct. 11-17 | Watkins Ch. 5  Mager & Pipe Ch. 13  Also refer back to Dessinger, Moseley, & Van Tiem |
| 9  Oct. 18-24 | **Develop**   1. Select one or two non-instructional interventions to develop using clearly defined criteria for selection and focus 2. Create one or two solutions / interventions appropriate to the gap(s) and need(s) you have identified | Watkins Ch. 6  Watkins – Selecting Performance Technologies | *Discussion:* peer feedback on intervention(s) |
| 10  Oct. 25-31 | TBD | *Discussion:* peer feedback |
| 11  Nov. 1-7 | *If necessary, we will take an additional week for Development and spend just one week on Evaluation – we will jointly evaluate our progress and decide together* | *Discussion:* peer feedback  *Assignment:*  Solution(s) due end of Week 11 |
| 12  Nov. 8-14 | **Evaluate**  Draft evaluation instruments and a plan for how and when evaluation data will be collected (e.g. schedule and frequency, what instrument, who responsible, etc.). | Watkins Ch. 7 & 8 | *Discussion:* peer feedback on evaluation plans |
|  | 13  Nov. 15-21 |  | TBD | *Discussion:* peer feedback on evaluation plans  *Assignment:*  Evaluation plan and instruments due end of Week 13 |
|  | **14**  **Nov. 22-28**  **Thanksgiving Break** | | | |
| Reflection | 15  Nov. 29 – Dec. 6 | Bringing it together - Group activity:  Develop a representational model that captures the range of performance support solutions that can be used to address performance gaps. Consider carefully both what the nature of various performance gaps and what are corresponding solutions or interventions for each type of gap. Also consider other important characteristics that may help you distinguish categories (for example, consider how Gilbert distinguishes between individual and organizational).  How are ID and PI related and how are they different?   * Concept Map * Written reflection | TBD | *Discussion:*  *Performance Support Model Activity; PI toolbox* |

**Grading**

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| --- |
| Grade Ranges for Final Grades |
| A+ 98-100  A 93-97  A- 90-92  B+ 87-89  B 83-86  B- 80-82 |

*Alignment: Main objectives & Corresponding Activities / Assessments*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Overarching objective | Corresponding Activity and Assessment |
| Application of PI (process) | Performance Improvement Project (group project) with milestone activities and deliverables  Scaffolding: Initial Systems Analysis using structure of Performance Barriers from Watkins  Discussions |
| Mental model of PI | Reflection and Concept Map  Discussions |
| Participation | Key discussions during course; feedback to peers during the Application portion of class (via discussions) |

**Assessments & Weighting**

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and will be graded according to the following scale:

Initial Performance System Analysis 60 points

Performance Improvement Project – Milestones & Teamwork: 200 points

*1. Assessment & Analysis of Performance Gap* 40 points

*2. Performance Plan* 30 points

*3. Performance Support System Design* 30 points

*4. Performance Intervention(s) / Solution(s)* 40 points

*5. Evaluation Plan & Instruments* 30 points

Participation (weekly) 75 points

**Total 305 points**

**Due Dates & Times**

Unless noted differently, all weekly activities are due at the end of that week by midnight (EST) on the last date for the week. Where specific due dates are noted for an assignment, the assignment is due by midnight on that day (EST). (Please note that participation is expected to occur *throughout* the week, not on the last day or two of the week. Consult the Participation Rubric.)

**Late Assignments**

For each day an assignment is late, 20% of the total possible will be deducted and a late assignment will only be accepted after the due date IF the student includes a communication with me about the reason for lateness. After five days, the assignment will not be accepted.

In rare cases, I will accept late assignments. However, this is only done if a student has communicated with me first, PRIOR to a deadline. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis only. If a student has a major life event arise that will cause him or her to turn in an assignment late or unable to participate in group work, please email me immediately to work with me on a solution.

In some cases, I may elect to return graded work and allow a student to revise and resubmit the work. This is also done only on a case-by-case basis as I determine. In such cases, the student has one week to revise and resubmit the work, and the maximum grade allowable is an A-. No revised work will be accepted after one week.

**Major Assignments Details**

**Initial Performance System Analysis**

I want to scaffold you into the analysis with a preliminary individual performance system analysis activity. This activity you will complete individually towards the start of the course so that everyone gains some practice. For this activity, you will conduct a quick analysis of a performance system (any performance setting of your choosing) using the main performance barriers covered in the readings. I will also provide you one or two examples so you can see how this has been used before in other settings. This should be anywhere from 2-4 pages. For each performance barrier, you should provide a description of any issues and make recommendations.

**Performance Improvement Project**

The major activity for this course will be a performance improvement project that you will work on individually. No later than the end of Week 4, you should have a specific focus selected for this project. It is designed to allow you to identify and focus on a performance issue in your setting where you work, although there are lots of things you may select as your topic in something as simple as one of your classes (current or previous) or in any environment around you. It does not have to be work related.

You may email me any time in advance of Week 5 to discuss your project ideas and settle on your focus. By Week 5, you should have your topic selected for your project and be ready to get started.

*Project performance support rubrics:* The project has been broken down into 5 milestone activities with deliverables. Further details for evaluation are covered in the Project rubric. I ***strongly***encourage you to review the project rubric in advance. I tried to design it as a performance support tool and as a stand-alone evaluation tool. ☺ Therefore, it has a great deal of detail. I recommend you look over all the rubrics for now to get a sense of what you will be doing, and then revisit each rubric in detail as we work on that milestone activity.

*1. Assessment & Analysis of Performance Gap*

It is possible to devote an entire class just to needs assessment. This milestone activity is designed to give you an overview of needs assessment and different types of analyses that can be conducted, as well as practice with conducting a few analyses. During this activity, the group should (a) clearly define the problem space using needs assessment (gap analysis), then (b) focus on specific performance problems on which you then conduct a root cause analysis. Your group report should include information about the target audience, a clarification of the problem space clearly supported by needs assessment, a clear gap analysis that defines specific performance problems, and results of the root cause analysis.

*2. Performance Plan*

Based on your needs assessment and analyses, articulate **performance and organizational objectives** and **corresponding measures of effectiveness**. These will drive what solutions you focus on to address the performance gaps. Use the OEM (Kaufman) model for this; you must demonstrate alignment across the levels of planning (i.e. micro-level objectives should be necessary and sufficient to achieve macro order objectives, and so on).

*3. Performance Support System Design*

Develop a performance support system design to address the various barriers to performance

* Let’s say it’s your job to recommend or oversee the full solution set here. What’s the plan? This should be similar to the systems analysis we did at the beginning – only more robust now and with data supporting each piece.

*4. Performance Intervention(s) / Solution(s)*

1. Select one or two non-instructional interventions to develop
2. Create one or two solutions / interventions appropriate to the gap(s) and need(s) you have identified

The shape of this will vary depending on what type of need you identify and what type of intervention you recommend and choose to address. Examples of types of products you might create for each type of intervention are provided under activities.

*5. Evaluation Plan & Instruments*

Aligned with your performance plan, design, and intervention, the group will write an evaluation plan and develop or adapt any necessary instruments for collecting data. This is beyond just saying what evaluation model or activities may be done. It should map out the schedule and frequency, what instruments are used when, who responsible, how data will be analyzed, who the reports should go to, etc.

**Participation**

*Discussions*

We will have weekly discussions in the Forums in the course Collab site; however, you should note that our discussions during the Foundations section (Weeks 1-4) and the Reflection section (the last two weeks) will be particularly intensive and will be the primary activity for our class during those weeks. Do plan to spend your time those weeks reading, checking the Forums frequently, and responding frequently with thoughtful and informed posts. During the Application section of the course, many of the Forum discussion will take the shape of small groups in which you are sharing your work and providing peer feedback. Some discussions during the application section of the course may focus on particular themes or topics and thus will be whole-group discussions for that week. *NOTE: If you would like to schedule small-group live online meetings for feedback sessions in lieu of discussion boards, let me know and I will be happy to set those up and join each group.*

Your participation grade will be based on your participation in these Discussions. Refer to the rubric on participation for further evaluation details.

**Additional Policies**

**University Email Policy**

Students are expected to activate and then check their official U.Va. email addresses on a frequent and consistent basis to remain informed of University communications, as certain communications may be time sensitive. Students who fail to check their email on a regular basis are responsible for any resulting consequences.

**University of Virginia Honor System**

All work should be pledged in the spirit of the Honor System of the University of Virginia.The instructor will indicate which assignments and activities are to be done individually and which permit collaboration. The following pledge should be written out at the end of all quizzes, examinations, individual assignments and papers: “I pledge that I have neither given nor received help on this examination (quiz, assignment, etc.)”. The pledge must be signed by the student. For more information please visit <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/>.

**Special Needs**

It is the policy of the University of Virginia to accommodate students with disabilities in accordance with federal and state laws. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation (e.g., in arrangements for seating, extended time for examinations, or note-taking, etc.),should contact the Student Disability Access Center (SDAC) and provide them with appropriate medical or psychological documentation of his/her condition. Once accommodations are approved, it is the student’s responsibility to follow up with the instructor about logistics and implementation of accommodations.

If students have difficulty accessing any part of the course materials or activities for this class, they should contact the instructor immediately. Accommodations for test taking should be arranged at least 14 business days in advance of the date of the test(s). Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the SDAC*:* 434-243-5180/Voice, 434-465-6579/Video Phone, 434-243-5188/Fax. For more information, visit their site at <http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/sdac/sdac.html>.