-Pinpointing-

What is Pinpointing

Pinpointing is selecting and describing a specific desired behaviour.

The first step in pinpointing is to select a critical behaviour that influences a business result. Pinpointing is naming the behaviour in terms of the specific responses that you do not want and then naming the specific responses that you do want. Most people just name the problem or the result in terms of what they *don't* want the person to do. For example, "Don't do that," "He is really hostile," or "She has a big ego." When you do this however you name the problem in nonbehavioural general ways. It is helpful to identify the behaviours you don't want only to the extent that it leads you to identifying the behaviours that you do want.

In addition, people frequently label. Labelling makes the behaviour or the problem sound very difficult to solve. For instance, if you call someone lazy or stupid, then the problem sounds impossible to solve because it sounds like a personality problem. When you label someone you are basically adult name calling and you are saying that the person will not do what you want them to.

Identifying a pinpoint requires the behaviour to be active. The Dead Man's Test helps to choose an active desired behaviour. The principle is this: *If a dead man can do the behaviour then the selected behaviour won't solve the problem or won't achieve the business result.* Can a dead man stop being careless? Yes. Can a dead man have no accidents? Yes. Can a dead man stop being hostile and argumentative? Yes. A pinpoint must be active, that is, you must describe the behaviour that you want. Stopping a negative behaviour does not guarantee that a desired one will take its place.

Once you have selected the desired behaviour the second step is to describe that behaviour in clear terms so that it can be communicated and observed. So, rather than John's work area to be tidy, name the specific behaviour that you do want. A better pinpoint would be that John is to clear his bench, store his tools away and put rubbish in the bin at the end of the day.

The NORMS of objectivity are a checklist to ensure our description of behaviour is based on facts rather than opinions.

Norms of Objectivity

N   **N**ot an interpretation
O   **O**bservable
R   **R**eliable
M   **M**easurable
S   **S**pecific

Not an Interpretation. Interpretations are conclusions about the facts, but they leave the facts unstated. Therefore, interpretations are subjective rather than objective and are based on people's opinions, hunches and feelings rather than observations. For instance, "being a team player" is subjective while "verbally supporting team members with praise" would be an objective pinpoint.

Observable. This is exactly that - observable. A behaviour must be observed through our senses. That is, you must be able to see or hear it. For example, "being careful" is non-observable while "walks within marked lines" is.

Reliable. Reliability means that two or more people agree that they observed the same behaviour. If a behaviour is a subjective interpretation then it is unlikely to be reliable.

Measurable. An objective description of behaviour should be measurable. You need statements about behaviour to be measurable so that you can see if improvement is occurring. Oftentimes the behaviour is not the problem per se but rather the frequency. For example, someone who gets angry occasionally probably wouldn't have a problem but someone who got angry every day might. In cases like this a way of tracking the frequency is not just helpful but critical.

Specific. As described above, the more specific a definition the better it communicates. For instance, "John meets deadlines" is not specific while "John submitted all required monthly reports prior to the deadline" is specific.