

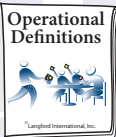
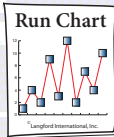
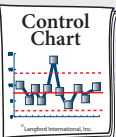

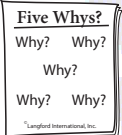
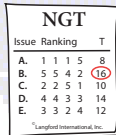
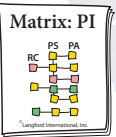

Langford Learning: Getting Wrong Right

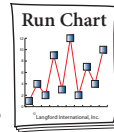
David P. Langford
November 2009

I was walking down the hallway with an assistant principal of a very large high school. Making conversation I said to him, "What is your job?" He answered, "For the last eleven years I have been the tardy czar. I keep track of lateness for thousands of students and staff." I replied, "That is a huge task. How do you manage it?" For the next few minutes he described the sophisticated system they had developed to monitor lateness, which included punishments, detention centers, automated call centers, hallway cameras, security guards, rewards and the extra central office staff it took to manage it all. I said, "In the last eleven years how have you significantly reduced or eliminated lateness?" He looked at me stunned and said, "That's not my job." As Dr. W. Edwards Deming stated, "Most people don't know what their job is."

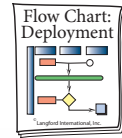
Is your job continual improvement or do you find yourself managing systems that need improving or eliminating?

Do you think you have a tardy problem? Use the following tools in this simple PDSA action story and see what you discover.

Define what it means to be late.  Collect data.  Is it a common or special cause problem? How do you know?  If it is a common problem to the system, share the data and ask students and/or staff, "What causes tardiness"  and why should students be on time? Prioritize the causes.   Put people to work  identifying new solutions. Create a new plan  with the help of

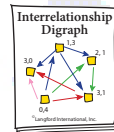


people involved. Did the plan create improvement.?



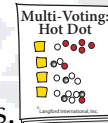
If the solution caused improvement, standardize it in policy, training or practice.

Now, move on to other opportunities. If the solution did not work as well as expected, re-



evaluate if lateness is still the **most** important problem?

If the answer is yes, start



the process over. If the answer is no, prioritize new opportunities.

Does this sound like too much work? Well, there is always a big demand for tardy czars!

Best regards,

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