

Implementation of Performance Coaching Using PPS/RBA

Phase 1: Build Role Database

Step 1: Define the roles that comprise the position

Most jobs/positions contain more than one role. Each role needs to be defined separately in terms of tasks, duties and activities because each role is likely to require distinctly different DiSC™ behavior. For example, the *position* of Accounting Manager may include four distinctly different *roles*. One role in the position of Accounting Manager may be defined as the tasks, duties, activities and behavior used to manage others, while a second role may involve performing technical accounting tasks and activities. There may be a third role that is defined by the tasks, duties and behavior required by the role of a management team member and a fourth role may be defined by the tasks, duties and behavior that comprise the role of support staff to other departments. Additional roles may involve other team or group involvement such as a special project team member or as a member of a network of affiliation within the organization. Each role is likely to have different behavioral requirements, as well as different activities, duties and responsibilities.

Step 2: Prioritize the roles

After each role has been defined, a Role Behavior Analysis® needs to be completed for each of the roles. In addition to using the RBA to define and assess the behavioral requirements of each role, the roles may need to be evaluated in terms of importance or frequency of use. The importance or emphasis on a particular role may change periodically as a result of changing organizational needs. Also, the roles and the priority of a particular role in a position may be different from organization to organization or within divisions of the same organization, even though the position has the same title. For example, the position of Accounting Manager in one organization may place the greatest emphasis on the technical accounting activities role, with secondary emphasis on technical support to other departments and much less emphasis on the roles of managing others and team member. Another organization may define the position of Accounting Manager in their organization with the role of managing others and member of special project teams as most important and place much less emphasis on the technical accounting activities role. The RBA can be used to clarify and define these differences.

Differences in role expectations and in the priority of each role involved in the total position description can clearly impact the effectiveness of the person in the position based on the “degree of fit” the person has with each of the roles. Because of the behavioral differences in the roles, it is likely that a person will have a ‘good fit’ with one or two of the roles in a position but will need to develop additional behaviors to be effective in the remaining roles. Development of the additional behaviors required by the role then becomes part of a performance development and management plan. The RBA is used to define for

each role the potential behaviors that may require ‘stretching’ and/or ‘redirecting’. The potential behaviors listed in the ‘stretch’ or ‘redirect’ categories are evaluated by interviewing or by observing performance to determine whether the person has already developed these behaviors or whether the behaviors will require additional training and coaching to be performed successfully. The behaviors identified as requiring additional skill development then become part of a written performance management plan with a specific learning plan and performance objectives with scheduled dates for review.

Step 3: Complete RBA for each role

There are a number of ways to develop an RBA for each position. One person can fill out the RBA— either a person in the position or a person managing the position. However, a single person response is less likely to be accurate than a multiple person response, so multiple person responses are the preferred approach. When using a multiple person response, the group evaluating the role can include a 360° view of the role: people in the role, people managing the role, customers of the role (internal and external) and direct reports.

Step 4: Defining the behavioral expectations for the role using multiple RBA responses

The preferred process is to have each person fill out the RBA individually, eliminating the ‘group think’ effect. After completing the RBA individually, the group response can be displayed. It is likely that there will be considerable difference in the responses. The next step is to have a dialogue about these differences in role behavior expectations and come to consensus on one RBA perception for the role which then becomes the Consensus RBA for the role. It is suggested that in all further application of RBA data, such as for career development and performance management, that the Consensus RBA be used rather than individual perceptions.

Using a dialogue process to come to consensus on role expectations is the preferred method for defining role expectations because the dialogue process frequently uncovers hidden expectations or a reasoning process that had not been considered by others. Hidden expectations or differences in logic may contribute to on-going conflict about performance expectations. Therefore, a valuable by-product of the consensus dialogue process is the uncovering and resolution of these conflicts on role behavior expectations. While it may seem to be a time-consuming process, clients who use the consensus process to define role expectations report that it has provided valuable insights on performance expectations that were unlikely to have occurred without the RBA consensus dialogue.

Conducting an RBA Consensus Dialogue Process

After each person has responded individually and the multiple perceptions have been plotted on the RBA Comparison Grid (manually or computer generated), each group of response items on the response form is discussed and the rank order of the response items is agreed upon by the respondents. This process is completed for each of the eight groups of response items. It maybe helpful to post

the individual ranking of Group 1 response items on page 4 of the RBA instrument (or from the one page response form) on a flipchart prior to discussing the items. When discussing individual preferences for ranking, each person presents his rationale for his ranking. The group listens to and discusses the various rationales and comes to a new consensus ranking based on the information provided in the discussion. This procedure is followed for each of the eight groups of response items on the response form. After completing the consensus dialogue for the eight groups for the first role, the group uses the same process for each of the remaining roles that comprise the position. At the conclusion of this exercise, there will be several clearly defined roles that comprise a specific position, for a specific department within a specific organization. Each role will have clearly defined DiSC behavioral expectations, in addition to the defined tasks, duties, responsibilities and activities of the role. The consensus RBA then should become part of the position/role database for that department which will be used for performance management, career development and HR decision support.

Constructing a composite RBA from multiple RBA responses

Many people have expressed a desire to construct a mathematical composite from multiple RBA responses. Unfortunately, behavior is not additive and cannot be averaged with any degree of accuracy. Additionally, the question arises whether each response should be weighted equally or might the person in the position have a more accurate perception than someone two levels removed? In that case, some manner of weighting of the scores may be indicated. If someone desires to use a mathematical composite rather than the consensus process, it could be done by evaluating the frequency of the value associated with each response associated with each group. However, using the consensus process is not only likely to be more accurate, but it is also likely to generate results that have greater acceptability or “buy in” which will significantly impact the successful implementation of the RBA information in performance management and HR decision support.

Phase 2: Using the RBA/PPS Comparison for Performance Management

Step 1: Administer the Personal Profile

Administer the Personal Profile following the guidelines for administration in a work focus.

Step 2: Identifying the ‘Degree of Fit’ between the role and the person

The consensus RBA for each role in a specific position can be compared to an individual’s Personal Profile to determine the “degree of fit” between the person’s natural style (or natural potential for the behavior) and the behavioral requirements for each role. The RBA/PPS Comparison generates three categories of statements of potential behavior for each role: ‘good fit’, ‘stretch’ and ‘redirect’. The behavioral statements in the categories ‘stretch’ and ‘redirect’ can be used to determine whether the person has already developed those behaviors or if the behaviors will require additional training to be able to demonstrate the behaviors in real-life situations. Behavioral competence can be determined

through interviewing and observing performance, focusing on the person's ability to perform the specific DiSC™ behaviors identified as requiring 'stretching' or 'redirecting'. The RBA Comparison Grid only indicates *potential behavior*, the actual ability to 'stretch' or 'redirect' a specific behavior needs to be determined through observation of the person when performing the behavior in real life situations. Behavioral interviewing questions can provide information about the likelihood that the person can perform the behavior, but the interview responses may also represent idealized rather than actualized performance. Or, the interview responses may represent how the person thinks he *should* be able to perform rather than how he *is able* to perform. Ultimately, observation is the most accurate measure for determining behavioral skill.

Describing intensity levels of role behavior

The results of the RBA are displayed on the RBA Comparison Grid which has four different levels of intensity: moderately low, moderate, moderately high and high. When describing a particular behavior required by a role, the intensity level needs to be specified. For example, a role might require moderately high levels of the behavior "cite evidence emphasizing a specific point of view or desired results" and moderately low levels of the behavior "achieve results by overcoming the objections of others." When comparing an individual's Personal Profile to the behavioral requirements of a role, both need to be stated in terms of the level of intensity. For example, John may have to 'stretch' his naturally occurring moderate level of the behavior "cite evidence emphasizing a specific point of view or desired results" to the moderately high level required by the role. John may need to 'redirect' his naturally occurring high levels of "achieve results by overcoming the objections of others" to the moderately low levels required by the role.

Using the specific behavioral language of the RBA

The language of the Role Behavior Analysis has been carefully selected to accurately reflect specific DiSC™ correlates of role-based behavior. Each phrase is designed to be used as a complete statement exactly as it occurs, with little or no editorial freedom. People frequently unknowingly distort the meaning of the phrases when summarizing or re-stating the phrase. For example, the first phrase on the RBA Comparison Grid says "take unprecedented risks" which someone might restate saying, "Yes, we want people to take unprecedented risks in this role after they have had a chance to gather information and think about it for a while." Such rephrasing changes the intent of the original statement that was a D behavior to either an S or C behavior. Or, people may summarize the eight specific Influencing role behavior statements by saying, "John needs to stretch his people skills." The statement "improve people skills" is not used in the RBA because it is not an accurate statement of a specific, observable DiSC™ behavior, even though many of the behaviors listed are commonly considered "people skills". Remaining close to a word-for-word use of the statement ensures an accurate DiSC™ description of the role.

Step 2: Assessing Behavioral Competence through Interviewing

The RBA/PPS Comparison generates statements that can be used to determine what degree of behavioral competence an individual has already developed in the behaviors identified as *potential* ‘stretch’ and ‘redirect’ requirements. The Performance Coaching Questions are framed to elicit a description of how the individual has produced the ‘stretch’ in behavior or ‘redirected’ a behavior in a prior situation. By using the specific behavioral language of the question, the interviewer can target his/her questioning to the specific behavioral competencies required by each role in the position. The RBA/PPS Comparison defines *potential* degree of fit between the role and the person’s natural style based on the responses to the RBA and the PPS, however the *actual* degree of fit can only be determined through interviewing and observing behavior.

Step 3: Observing Behavioral Competence

After the behavioral expectations for the various roles in a specific position have been identified and used to develop an individual performance management plan, the RBA provides the language for observing and assessing development of specific DiSC™ role-based behavioral competencies. For example, suppose it was identified that an individual needed to ‘stretch’ the behavior “remain neutral when conflict first arises” and ‘redirect’ the behavior “move forcefully even though others may be offended”. A learning plan for these specific skills was developed which included classroom training in assertiveness skills and peer coaching within the next 60 days. At the end of sixty days, the degree of skill that the individual had or had not developed could be observed in his ability to perform the specific behaviors in real life interactions. If the level of demonstrated behavioral skill remained low or nonexistent, alternate training and intervention plans would need to be implemented. The RBA statements describe observable behaviors that can be trained and assessed with a goal of increasing role-based behavioral skill competence.

Step 4: Using the RBA/PPS Comparison to develop learning plans

The RBA/PPS Comparison provides the information necessary to develop specific learning plans for developing specific behavioral competencies. The development of behavioral competence can be used as a pre and post skill assessment and will meet the level 3 criteria for measuring the effectiveness of transfer of training. By using the behaviors identified as ‘stretch’ and ‘redirect’ as the desired performance outcomes for a specific learning intervention, a particular learning method can be evaluated to determine how effective it will be in helping the individual develop a specific behavioral skill. For example, if an individual needed to ‘stretch’ her moderately low naturally occurring level of “facilitate interaction with others to achieve results” to the moderately high levels of that behavior required by the role of managing others in the position of Accounting Manager, the learning activity would need to be targeted to developing that specific behavioral skill. The key question in designing a learning plan is where and how would a person learn to do this—“facilitate interaction with others to achieve results”—what learning design would be optimal. The term learning is

used rather than training because the learning design may or may not use training as a method for achieving behavioral competence. The desired outcome is learning *not* training; training is one *method* for achieving learning, not a performance outcome in itself. Training may not be the most effective learning method for developing the behavioral skill of “facilitate interaction with others”. Mentoring and peer coaching may be a more effective method for developing competence in that skill.

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