Designing Effective Processes: OBM in Human Service Settings

Jeffrey Skowron Ph.D., BCBA-D

Vice President, Diagnostic and Assessment Services

Beacon ABA Services/Beacon Assessment Center

Disclosures

Jeffrey states that he is employed at Beacon ABA Services, Inc., and receives a salary for his work at Beacon. Jeffrey is also a paid instructor at Westfield State University and Cambridge College. Jeffrey does not have any relevant non-financial relationships to the course content.

Objectives

1. Participants will be able to identify *Total Performance System Diagrams* and their components

2. Participants will be able to identify *Process Maps* and areas on the maps where breakdowns and inefficiencies in the process are likely to occur

3. Qualifying participants will receive CEUs for attending the presentation

Recent Changes in ABA in Massachusetts: Systems and Process Level Challenges

Changes in models of ABA service delivery

- Home- vs. school/center-based services
- Services delivered in remote locations with limited opportunities for direct contact between employees
- Less control of treatment environment
- Need to convey large amounts of data across geographically separate areas
- Clients involved with multiple treatment systems

# Recent Changes in ABA in Massachusetts: Systems and Process Level Challenges

Changes in funding sources for ABA services

- ARICA
- "Retrofitting" processes designed for existing systems/funding sources/oversight agencies
- Sole proprietorships with no existing processes
- Early-onset "Founder's Syndrome"
- Funder "adaptation"
- Impacts of Mass Health?

Recent Changes in ABA in Massachusetts: Systems and Process Level Challenges

Changes in the people providing the ABA services
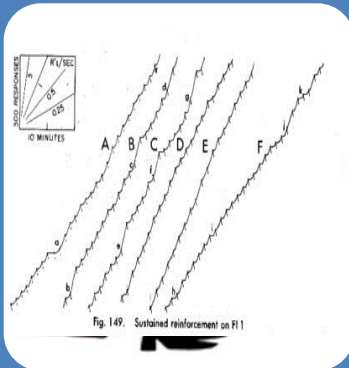
- Behavior Analyst credentialing and licensure
- Varying degrees of experience and training, both within and without the credential
- Cultural/cohort differences between senior managers and early career staff (including differences related to uses of technology)

Fig. 149. Sustained reinforcement on FI 1

Pick an Employee Performance Problem

How *do* Behavior Analysts Address this Problem?

- Some commonly used methods
  - Unstructured discussions of "how things should be done"
    - These often turn into discussion of "how it used to be done back when people (e.g. me and people like me) actually cared about their work and what other people thought about the work we did")
  - Assigning problem solving duties to individuals or small groups, who then engage in more structured discussions of "how things should be done"
  - Somebody with authority says "do it this way because I say that's how it should be done!"
    - Individuals independently coming up with work-around procedures that may somewhat improve performance in their little corner of the system

How *Should* Behavior Analysts Address this Problem?

Organizational

Behavior

Management

3 Core Areas of
Organizational Behavior Management

Let's Return to our Employee Performance Problem

Ask *THE* Question

Why would you expect that employee to perform that task properly?

Why would you expect that employee to perform that task properly?

IF

-Task is important/needs to be done
-Employee trained to/has demonstrated *fluency* with task in similar environment
-Adequate prompts to properly perform task
-Adequate resources (time, materials, etc.) to properly complete task
-Staff physically able to properly complete task
-Maximum *PICs* for proper task completion
-Minimum *PICs* for improper or competing task completion

Likely Problem with Individual Employee

Remediation or Termination

IF

Any Other Answer

Likely a Systems Level, Process Level, and/or Performance Management Level Problem

Behavioral Systems Analysis

Process Analysis

Performance Diagnostic/ ABC Analysis

Behavioral Systems Analysis

Creating Self-Managing Systems

Processing System Feedback Slide

Is it later than 2:05pm? If so, you better speed things up a little.

Total Performance System Diagram

Brethower, D.B. (2001). Managing a person as a system. In L.J. Hayes, J. Austin, R. Houmanfar, & M.C. Clayton (Eds.), *Organizational Change* (pp. 89-105). Reno: Context Press.

PROCESSING
SYSTEM FEEDBACK

RECEIVING
SYSTEM FEEDBACK
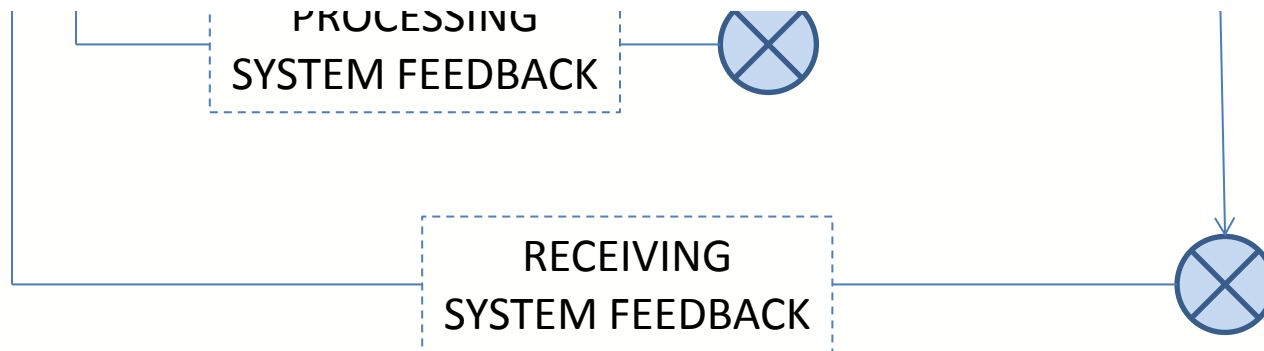
Goal Statement

Total Perform...

The 7 Elemen...

1. Goal/Purpose...

- What results a... ...e results is beneficial to the performer ...

2. Inputs

- Time, tools, ma... ...ials increases effort and decreases...

3. Processing Sys...

- Specific ways o...

4. Processing Sys...

- Feedback from... ...e work is going smoothly

ACORN Test for Goals/Missions

Accomplishment: Does the mission or goal identify an accomplishment and not a process or behavior?

Control: Does the organization/position have control over the accomplishment?

Overall Objective: Have we identified the true purpose of the organization/process, or merely a subgoal?

Reconcilable: If this mission/goal were achieved would other parts of the organization/system be impacted negatively?

7 Elements of a Self-managing System

5. Outputs

- What specific products are to be produced; includes the time, quality, and cost standards of the products
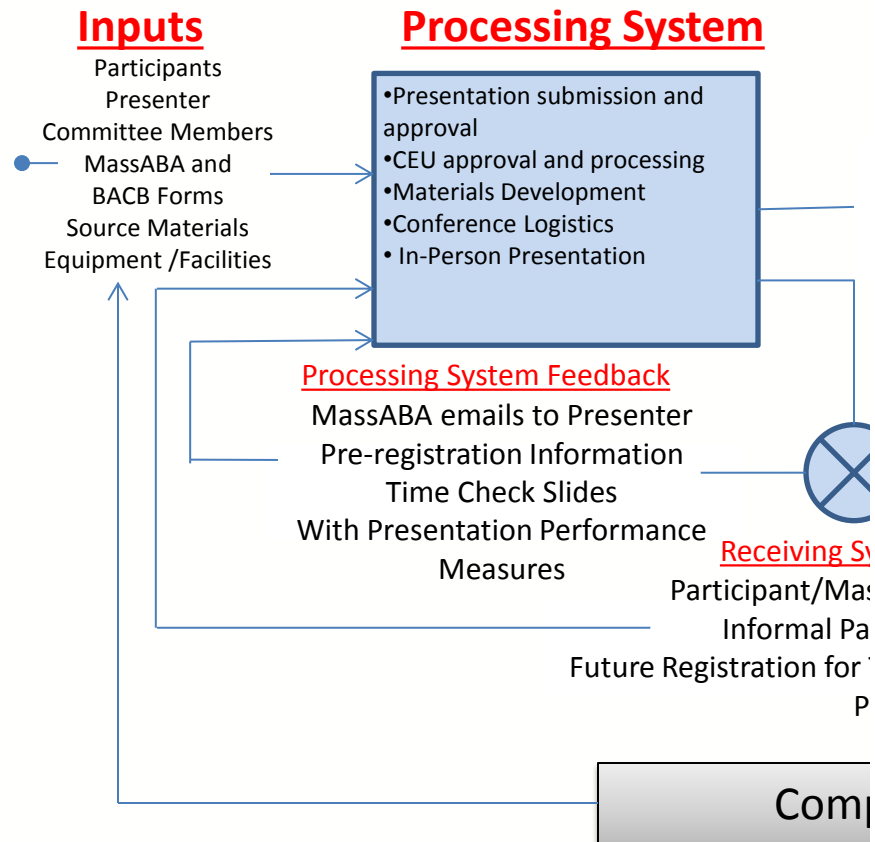
6. Receiving System

- The people who receive the outputs

7. Receiving System Feedback

- Information about the quality of the products, according to customer standards

Total Performance System Di...

ACORN Test for Goals/Missions

Accomplishment: Does the mission or goal identify an accomplishment and not a process or behavior?

Control: Does the organization/position have control over the accomplishment?

Overall Objective: Have we identified the true purpose of the organization/process, or merely a subgoal?

Reconcilable: If this mission/goal were achieved would other parts of the organization/system be impacted negatively?

Inputs
Participants
Presenter
Committee Members
MassABA and
BACB Forms
Source Materials
Equipment /Facilities

Processing System
- Presentation submission and approval
- CEU approval and processing
- Materials Development
- Conference Logistics
- In-Person Presentation

Processing System Feedback
MassABA emails to Presenter
Pre-registration Information
Time Check Slides
With Presentation Performance
Measures

Receiving S...
Participant/Mas...
Informal Pa...
Future Registration for ...
P...

Comp...

Goal Statement
- By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to identify *Total Performance System Diagrams* and their components, as well as identify *Process Maps* and areas on the maps where breakdowns/inefficiencies in the process are likely to occur
- Qualifying Participants will receive CEUs (ACORN TEST)

Let's Discuss a TPS Diagram for a Typical Process

Total Performance System Diagram

Brethower, D.B. (2001). Managing a person as a system. In L.J. Hayes, J. Austin, R. Houmanfar, & M.C. Clayton (Eds.), *Organizational Change* (pp. 89-105). Reno: Context Press.

PROCESSING SYSTEM FEEDBACK

RECEIVING SYSTEM FEEDBACK
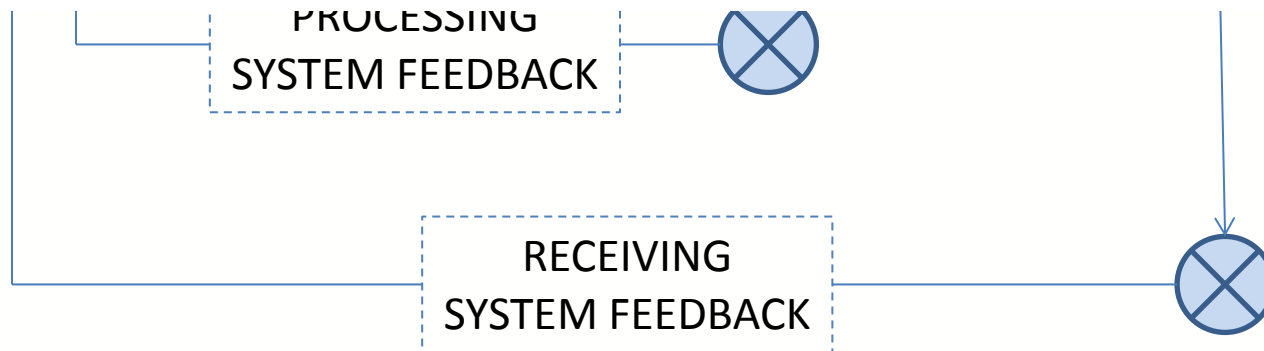
Goal Statement

Processing System Feedback Slide

Is it later than 2:30pm? If so, you better speed things up a little more!

Processing System Feedback Slide

GROUP 1
What do you
call this thing?

GROUP 2
What do you call
feedback from the work
process that indicates
whether or not the
work is going smoothly?

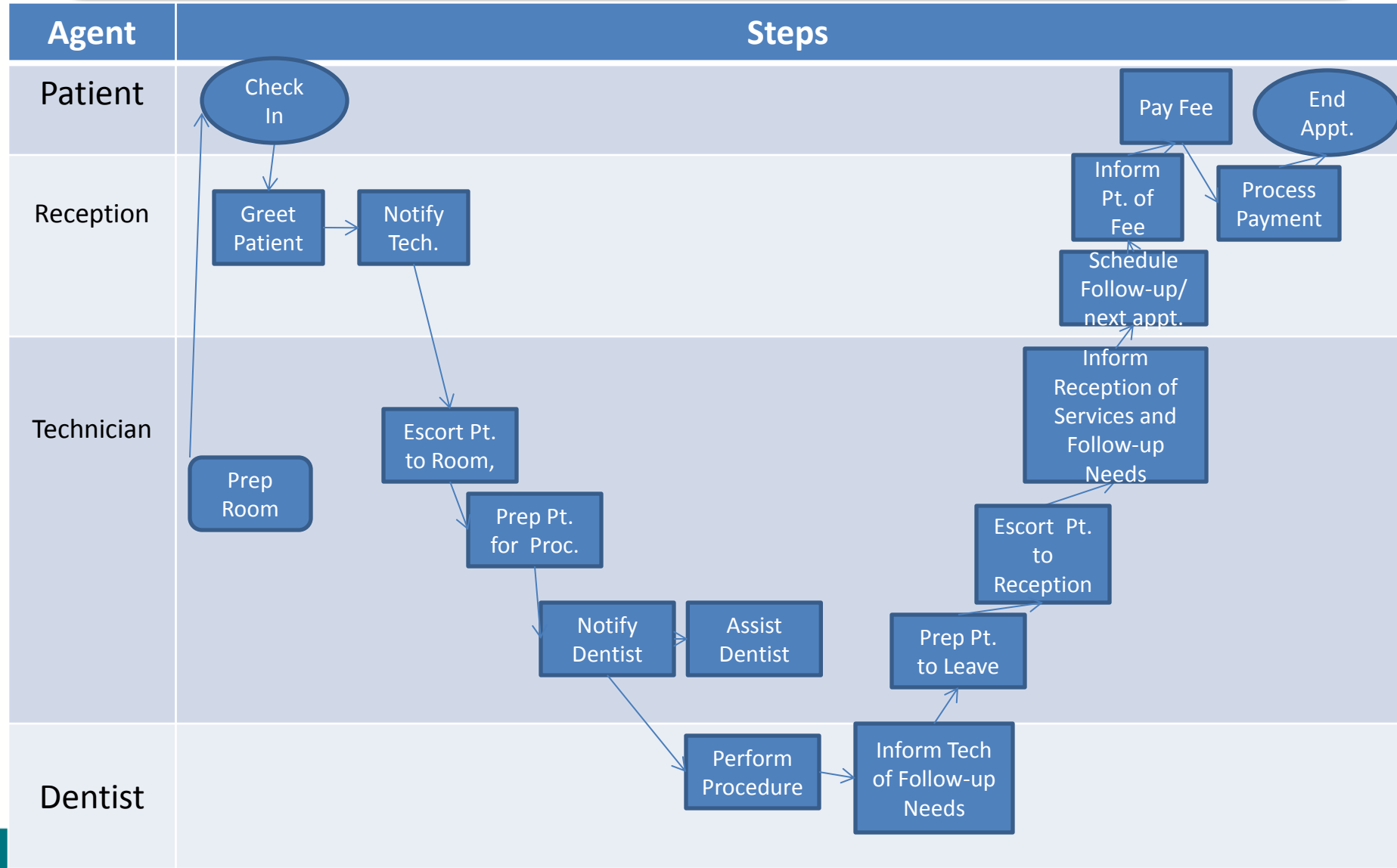# Total Performance System Diagram- This Presentation

Inputs

Participants
Presenter
Committee Members
MassABA and
BACB Forms
Source Materials
Equipment /Facilities

Processing System

- Presentation submission and approval
- CEU approval and processing
- Materials Development
- Conference Logistics
- In-Person Presentation

Outputs

Participants with Increased Abilities related to Process Development (by end of the presentation)

Receiving System

Participants
MassABA

Processing System Feedback

MassABA emails to Presenter
Pre-registration Information
Time Check Slides
With Presentation Performance Measures

Receiving System Feedback

Participant/MassABA Feedback Forms
Informal Participant Feedback
Future Registration for Talks with Similar Topics/Same Presenter

Competition?

Goal Statement

- By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to identify *Total Performance System Diagrams* and their components, as well as identify *Process Maps* and areas on the maps where breakdowns/inefficiencies in the process are likely to occur
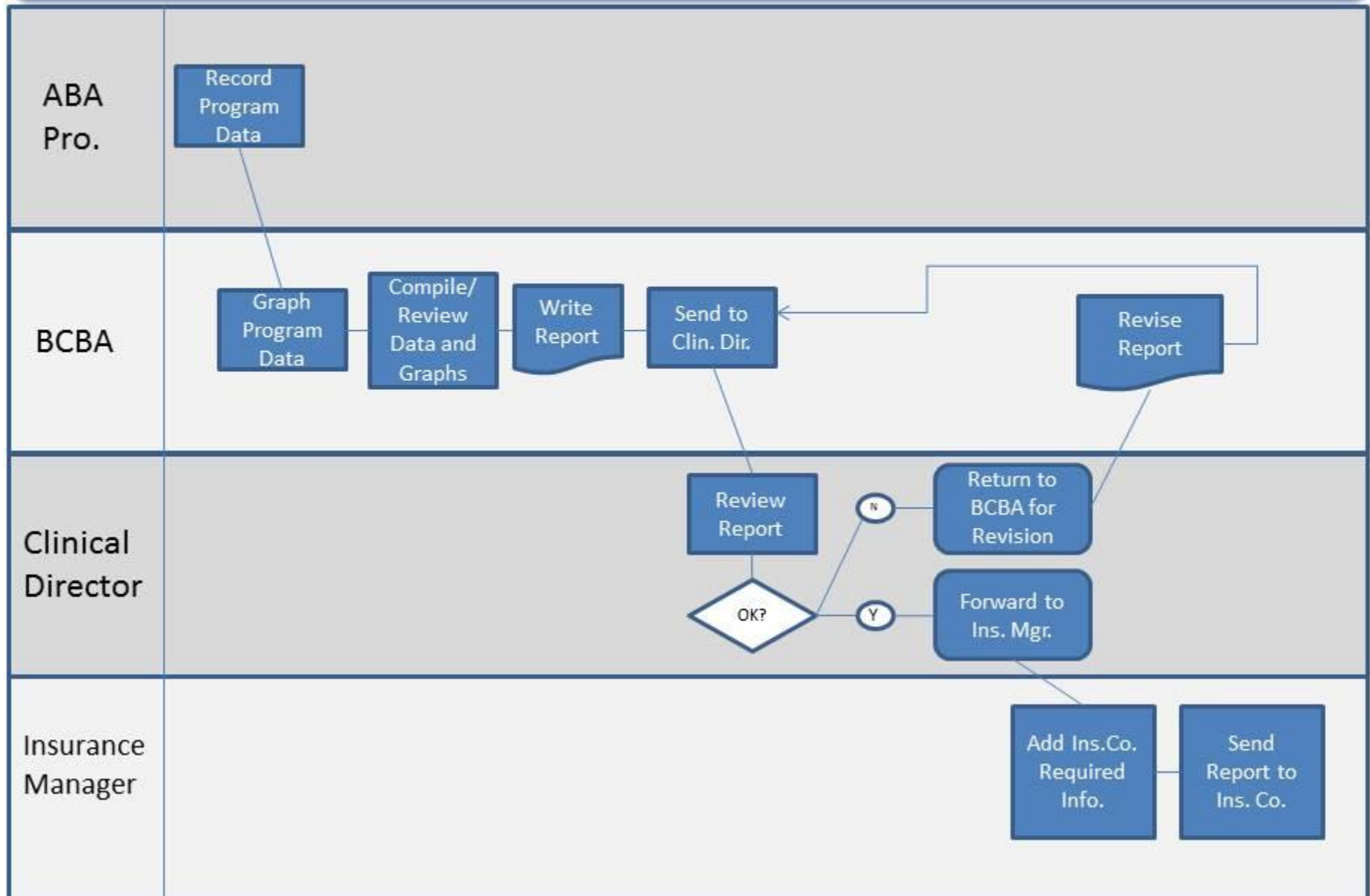- Qualifying Participants will receive CEUs
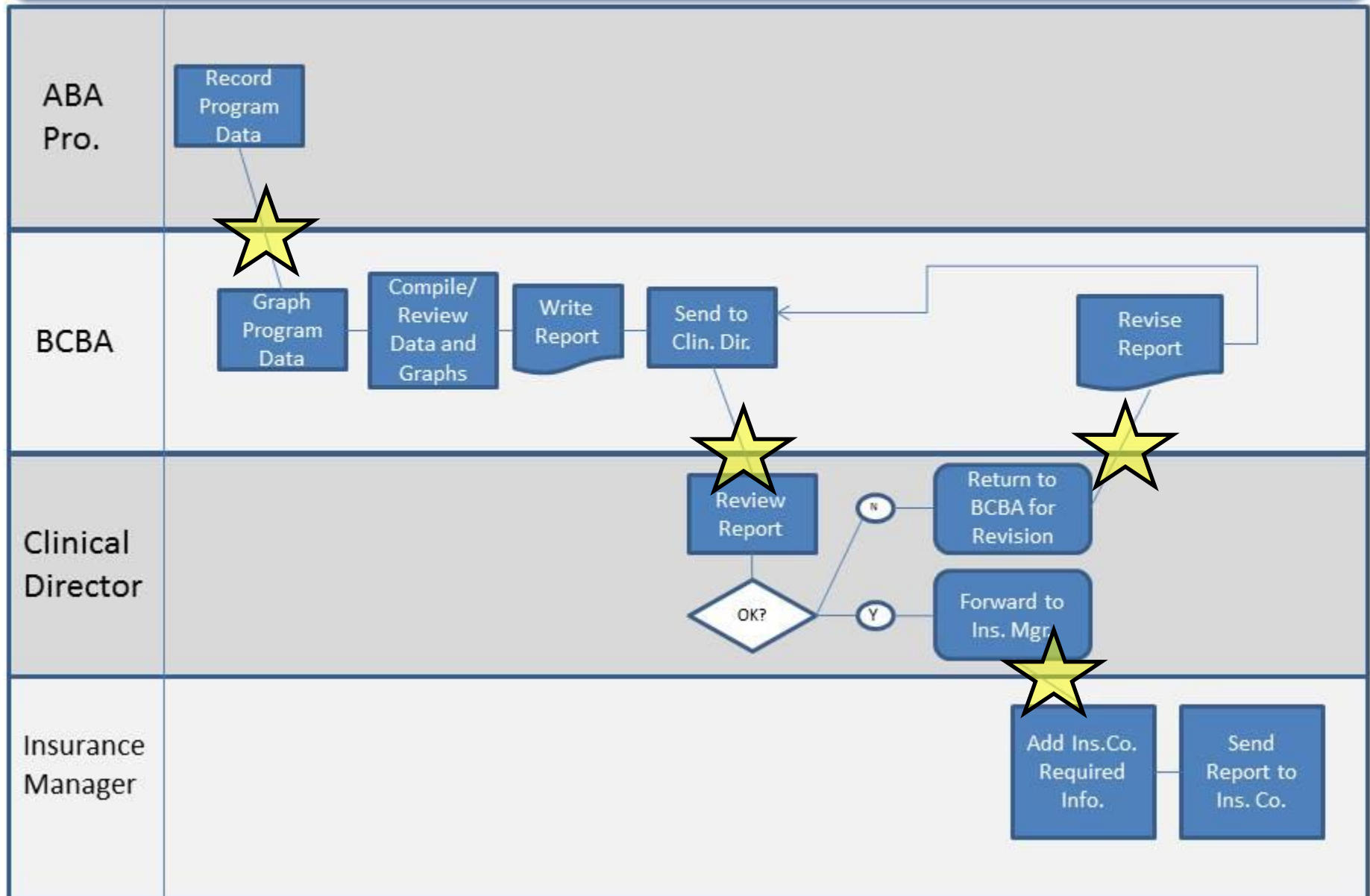
Process Mapping

Process Map- Dental Procedure

Agent	Steps
Patient	Check In → ... Pay Fee, End Appt.
Reception	Greet Patient → Notify Tech. ... Inform Pt. of Fee, Process Payment, Schedule Follow-up/ next appt.
Technician	Prep Room, Escort Pt. to Room, Prep Pt. for Proc., Notify Dentist → Assist Dentist ... Prep Pt. to Leave, Escort Pt. to Reception, Inform Reception of Services and Follow-up Needs
Dentist	Perform Procedure → Inform Tech of Follow-up Needs

Process Map- Submitting Progress Reports

ABA Pro.
- Record Program Data

BCBA
- Graph Program Data
- Compile/ Review Data and Graphs
- Write Report
- Send to Clin. Dir.
- Revise Report

Clinical Director
- Review Report
- OK?
- N → Return to BCBA for Revision
- Y → Forward to Ins. Mgr.

Insurance Manager
- Add Ins.Co. Required Info.
- Send Report to Ins. Co.

Using Process Maps to Identify Potential Problems

- Look at where the process crosses between agents
  - How does the information and other resources get passed?
  - Are there adequate prompts for the receiving agent to take over the process?
  - Is there feedback that information has been successfully passed over?
  - Does the transfer unneccesarily slow down the process?

Process Map- Submitting Progress Reports

ABA Pro.	Record Program Data
BCBA	Graph Program Data → Compile/Review Data and Graphs → Write Report → Send to Clin. Dir. ← ← Revise Report
Clinical Director	Review Report — N → Return to BCBA for Revision; OK? — Y → Forward to Ins. Mgr.
Insurance Manager	Add Ins.Co. Required Info. — Send Report to Ins. Co.

Using Process Maps to Identify Potential Problems

- Look at any situation where an agent only performs one step of the process
  - Is this because that step requires a special skill that other agents don't possess?
    - If not, can the step be performed by someone with responsibility for more steps in the process

Process Map- Submitting Progress Reports
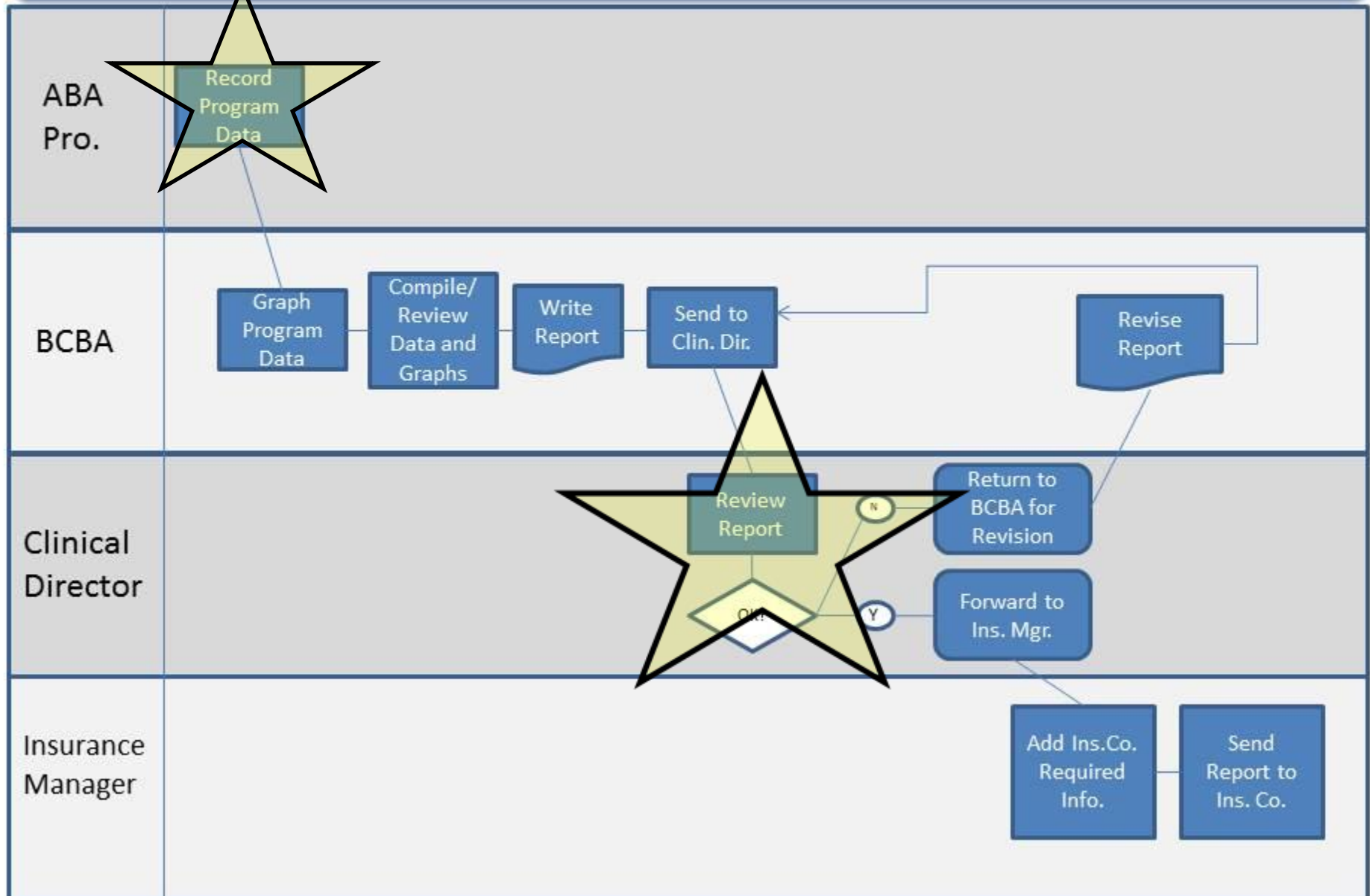
Behavioral Systems Analysis- An Integrated Approach

- Diener, L.H., McGee, H.M., & Miguel, C. F. (2009). An integrated approach to conducting a behavioral systems analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management, 29(2)*, 108-135.

- Subsystem exist within larger systems- Due to these interconnections, changes in one system inevitably impact other systems.

- Attempts to change any organizational behavior at any level may be less effective due to problems at other, interconnected levels

1. Organizational Level

Business results measured, monitored, and managed by relevant manager

Business Results

2. Process Level

Process results measured, monitored, and managed by relevant manager

Process Results

3. Performer (BCBA) Level

Individual results measured, monitored, and managed by relevant manager

Individual Results
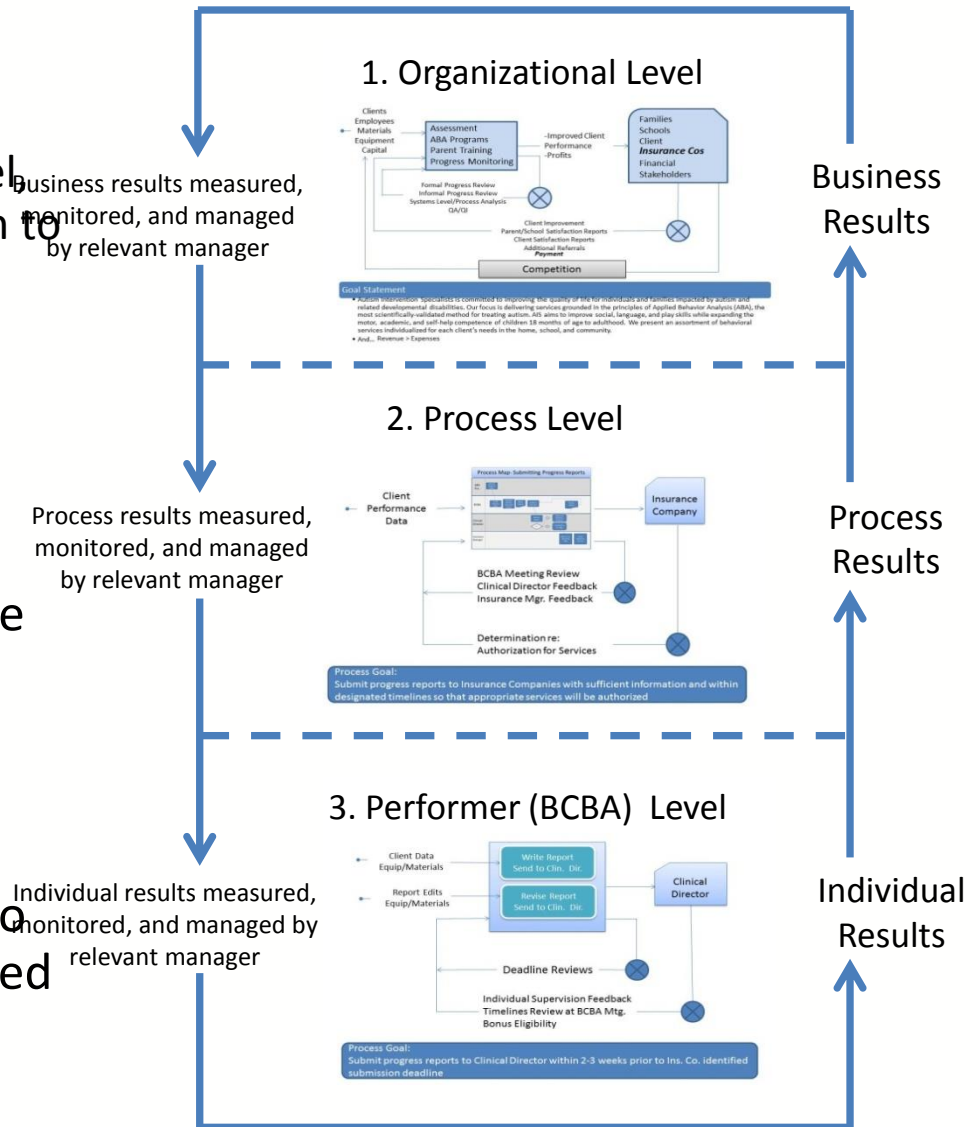
Processing System Feedback Slide

Is it later than 2:55pm? If so, we're done. If not, solicit questions or comments

Is it earlier than 2:40? If so, you messed up!

10 Step Performance Management Process

1. Select the Performance Problem → 2. State the Problem Behaviorally → 3. Measure the Problem

4. Graph the Data → 5. Analyze the Performance → 6. Develop an Intervention Plan

7. Perform a Systems Check → 8. Implement the Plan → 9. Continue Monitoring Data → 10. Evaluate the Impact
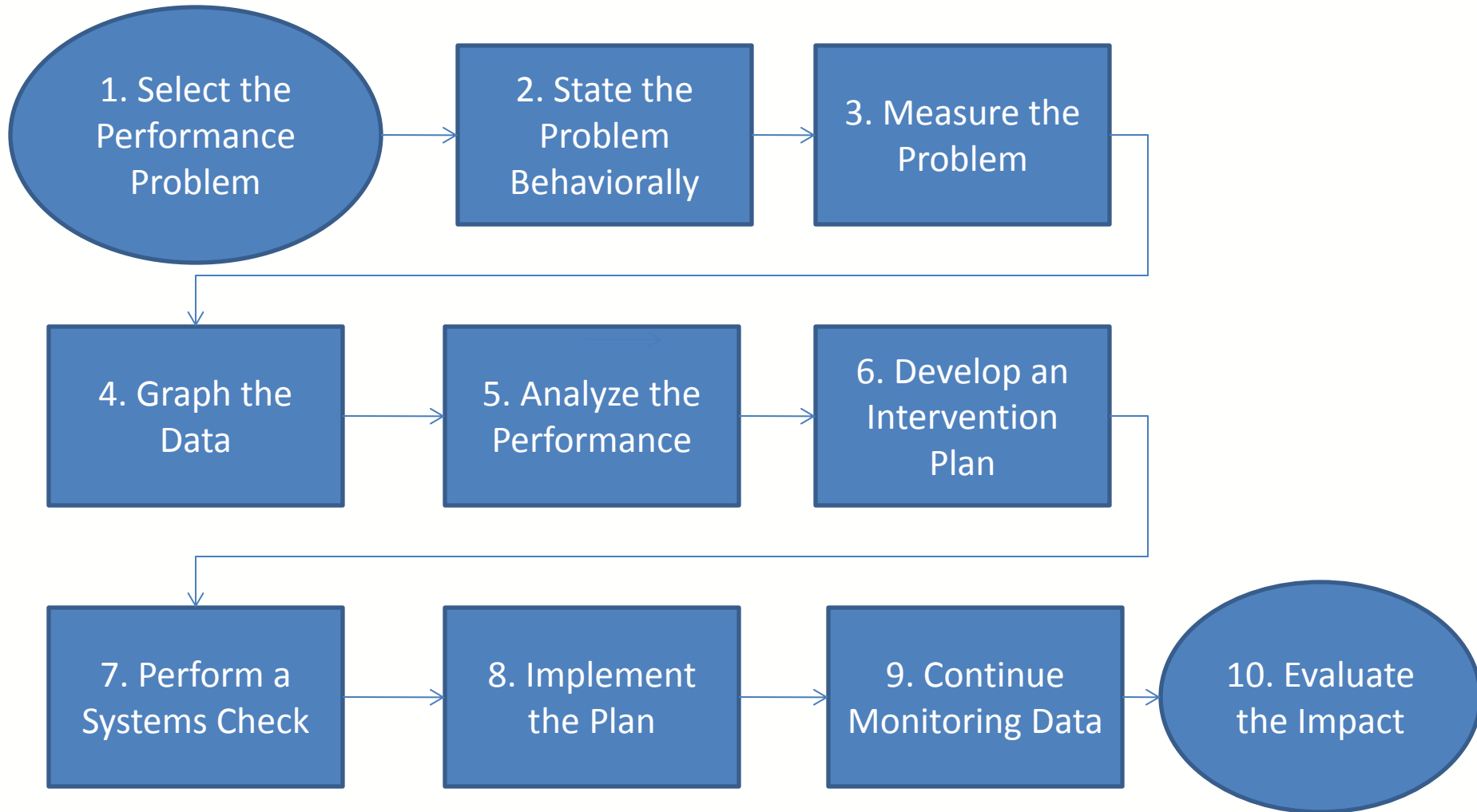
10 Step Performance Management Process

Antecedent Related Questions (Interventions) Summary

- Does the task need to be done? (Eliminate Task)
- Do staff know they are supposed to do it? (Effective Prompting)
- Do staff know how to do it? Do staff know how to do it well?
- (Training to Fluency)
- Do staff want to do it? (Altering Non-Preferred Nature of Task)
- Can it be done? (Fix/Change Equipment or Environmental Deficiencies)
- Can it be done efficiently? (Alter Properties of Task, Materials, or Environment)
- Are there other factors interfering with task performance? (Address things like burnout, rumors, employee "beliefs")
- Are there, despite doing any/all of the above, personal reasons why the staff will not be able to do it? (Clinical Intervention, Job Reassignment, or Termination)

FIGURE 1. A visual depiction of the areas in which a performance analyst may ask questions and/or collect data regarding the facilitative and/or hindering variables in an organizational setting. [From: Austin, Carr, Agnew (1999)]
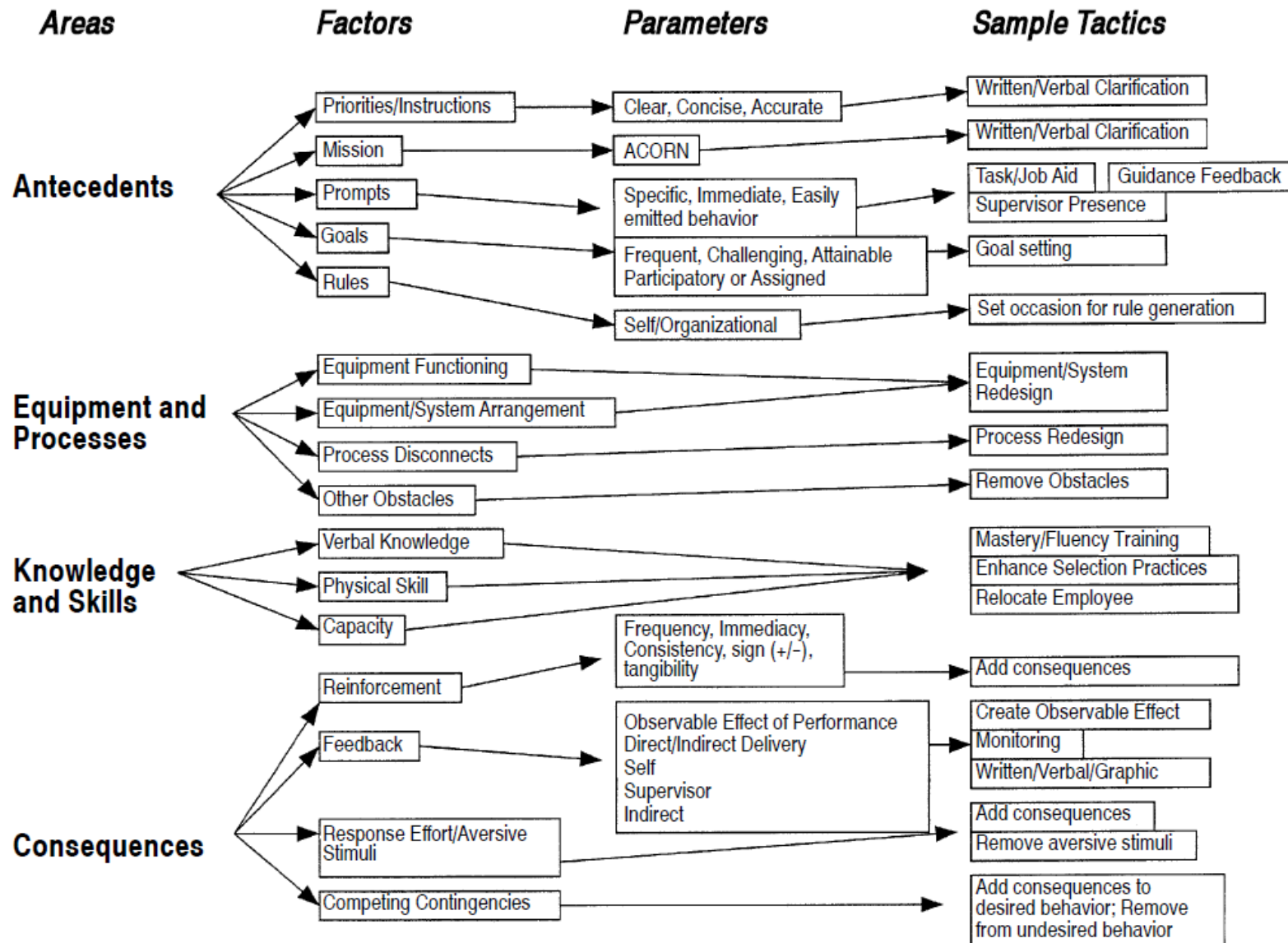
Exercise 3- Performance Diagnostic

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Daniels ABC Analysis Model

- We used the 7 Step ABC Analysis model described by Aubrey Daniels to conduct a behavioral analysis of our problematic employee behavior:

Daniels, A.C. (1989). *Performance Management.* Tucker, GA: Performance Management Publications. As cited by Austin, J. (2000). Performance analysis and performance diagnostics, in Austin, J., & Carr, J.E. (Eds.), *Handbook of Applied Behavior Analysis,* Reno, NV: Context Press.

Analysis at the Individual Level-
Daniels (1989)- A-B-C Analysis (starting to get into Performance Management topic)

1. Operationalize Performance Problems	What did I see the person do that would make me conclude he was lazy? Unmotivated?
2. Describe Performance in Active Terms	What the performer **SHOULD DO-** "Increase error free work" vs. "Commit no errors"
3. Identify and Focus on Frequent/Severe Problems	Only proceed for recurring problems that are of importance to the agency

Analysis at the Individual Level- Daniels (1989)- A-B-C Analysis

4. A-B-C Analysis for Problematic Performance

1- List all Antecedents and Consequences

2- Cross off Consequences not important to employee performance

3-Indicate P/N, I/F, and C/U

5. A-B-C Analysis for Correct Performance

Repeat Step 4 for desired behavior

6. Diagnose Performance Problem

Summarize remaining antecedents and consequences

Analysis at the Individual Level- Daniels (1989)- A-B-C Analysis

7. Provide Solution

ADD PICs (Positive, immediate, and Certain Consequences) and Antecedents for Desired Performance

Exercise 4- ABC Analysis

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ABC Analysis- Submitting Reports

Undesirable Performance:

Late Progress report Submission- Less than 2 weeks before the Insurance Company deadline

Correct Performance:

Report Submission at least 2-4 weeks before the deadline to allow for time for insurance processing and parent signature

Frequency/Severity:

Approximately 68% of reports in December were delayed to the point of being submitted late to the insurance company.

Serious problem- delays payment or may even result in delivery of non-reimbursable services

ABC Analysis- Problem Performance Submitting Reports Late

Antecedents
• Only 4 hours of time could be billed for a progress report.
• Due to new insurance company requirements reports were being reformatted frequently.
• Report writing was reported to take between 12 and 16 hours.

Consequences	P =positive N=Negative	I=Immediate F=Future	C=Certain U=Uncertain
Verbal feedback from non-supervisory person who does insurance claims	N	F	U
Activities other than completing report on time (e.g. seeing clients and billing) result in feedback from management	P	I	U
Paid set amount every two weeks	P	F	C

ABC Analysis- Desired Performance Submitting Reports On Time

Antecedents
• Verbally told that reports should be in on time.
• 4 hours of time could be billed for a progress report.

Consequences	P =positive N=Negative	I=Immediate F=Future	C=Certain U=Uncertain
Verbal Feedback from non-supervisory person who does insurance claims	P	I	U
Completing report on time might result in fewer billable hours.	N	I	U
Paid set amount every two weeks	P	F	C

ABC Analysis-
Meeting Billable Hours Quota

Undesirable Performance:

 Performance at 26.3 billable hours per week per BCBA on average. This was considered too low.

Correct Performance:

Goal was 32 billable hours per week.

Frequency/Severity:

Most BCBAs were rarely meeting the weekly goal.

Serious problem in that revenue not maximized and promoted negative interactions between BCBAs and stakeholders/management

ABC Analysis- Problem Performance Not Meeting Billable Hours Quota

Antecedents
• Told to meet quota
• "You might not meet your quota" email

Consequences	P =positive N=Negative	I=Immediate F=Future	C=Certain U=Uncertain
Feedback was given for not meeting hours quota	N	I	C
Paid set amount every two weeks	P	F	C

ABC Analysis- Problem Performance Not Meeting Billable Hours Quota

Antecedents
• Told to meet quota
• "You might not meet your quota" email

Consequences	P =positive N=Negative	I=Immediate F=Future	C=Certain U=Uncertain
Feedback was given for meeting quota	P	F	U
Feedback was given for meeting quota	N	F	U
Paid set amount every two weeks	P	F	C

Strategies to Improve Performance

- Adding more Positive Consequences

- Making consequences immediate

- Making consequences certain

- Reduce reliance on Negative Reinforcement

Strategies to Improve Performance

- If BCBAs turn in all reports 2 weeks prior to Insurance company due date, then eligible for performance based bonuses
- Bonus Plan based on billable hours per 4 week cycle
  - BCBAs choose salary/minimum billables per cycle combination
  - Added more autonomy and flexibility in scheduling (e.g. easier to do 100/month than 25/week
  - Bonuses for each billable hour over minimum

Consequences for not meeting Minimal Performance Expectations

- The clarity around when this will happen should make it less stressful than other punishers

- Consequences applied based on not meeting performance expectation for a 4 week cycle within a 12 month rolling period.

- The first time an employee does not meet criterion s/he will go to performance management stage 1, then stage 2 and so on.

Performance Improvement Stages

- Stage I
  - Performance improvement plan :
    - Meet with clinical director to identify problems and create action Plan
- Stage II- Second time during 12 month period
  - The employee would get a written warning.
  - Weekly meeting with Clinical Director to identify scheduling problems
- Stage III- Third time during 12 month period
  - Final written warning
  - Option to drop down BCBA Level
  - If don't drop Level, 4th time=Termination

Results
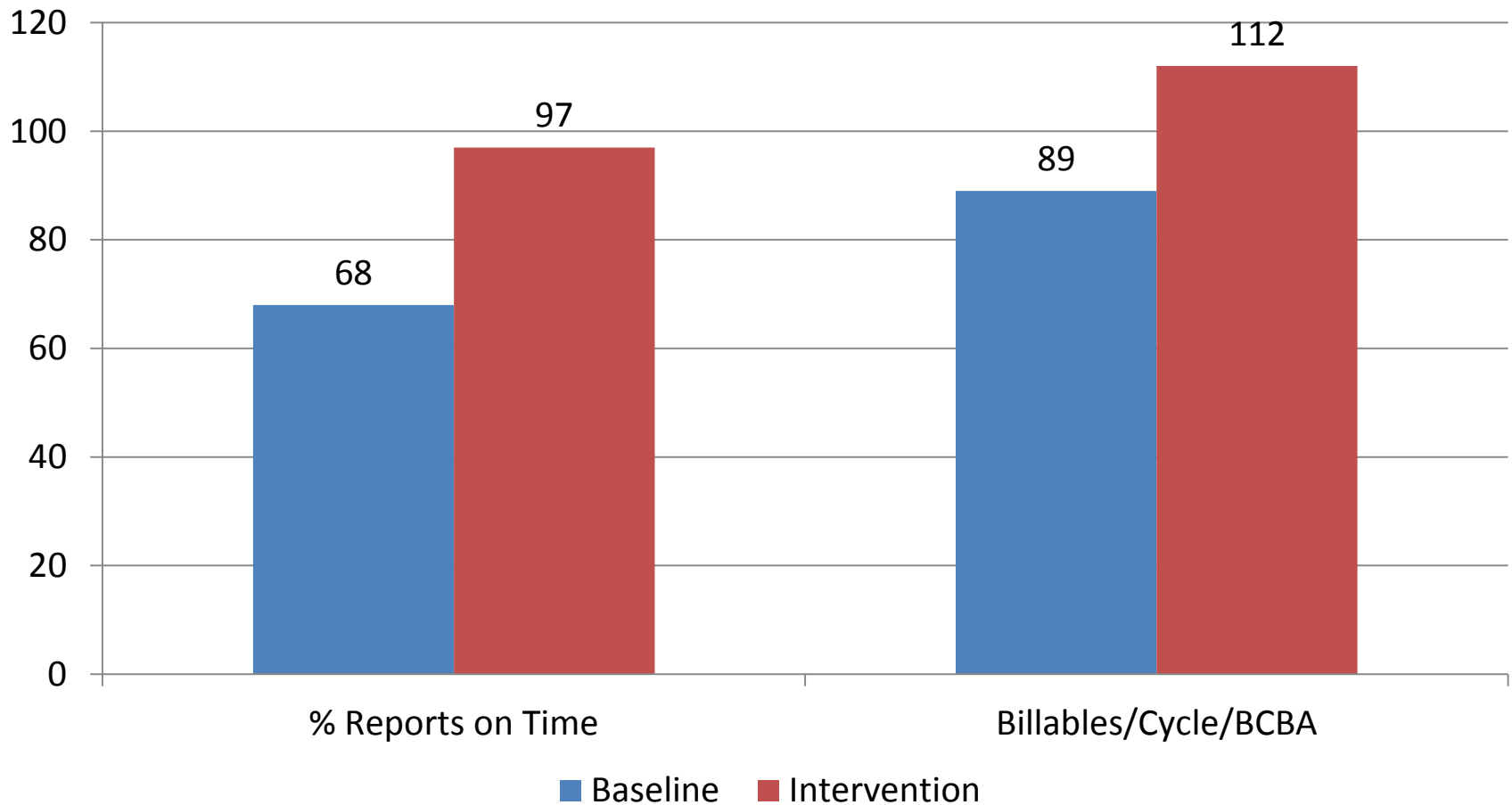
BCBA Satisfaction Survey

- Administered Pre-Performance Management Plan (November 2012) and Post-Performance Management Plan (April 2013)

- Results need to be interpreted cautiously, particularly when trying to directly attribute them to the Performance Management Plan

I feel strong sense of teamwork and cooperation with my Co-workers

Rating Frequency
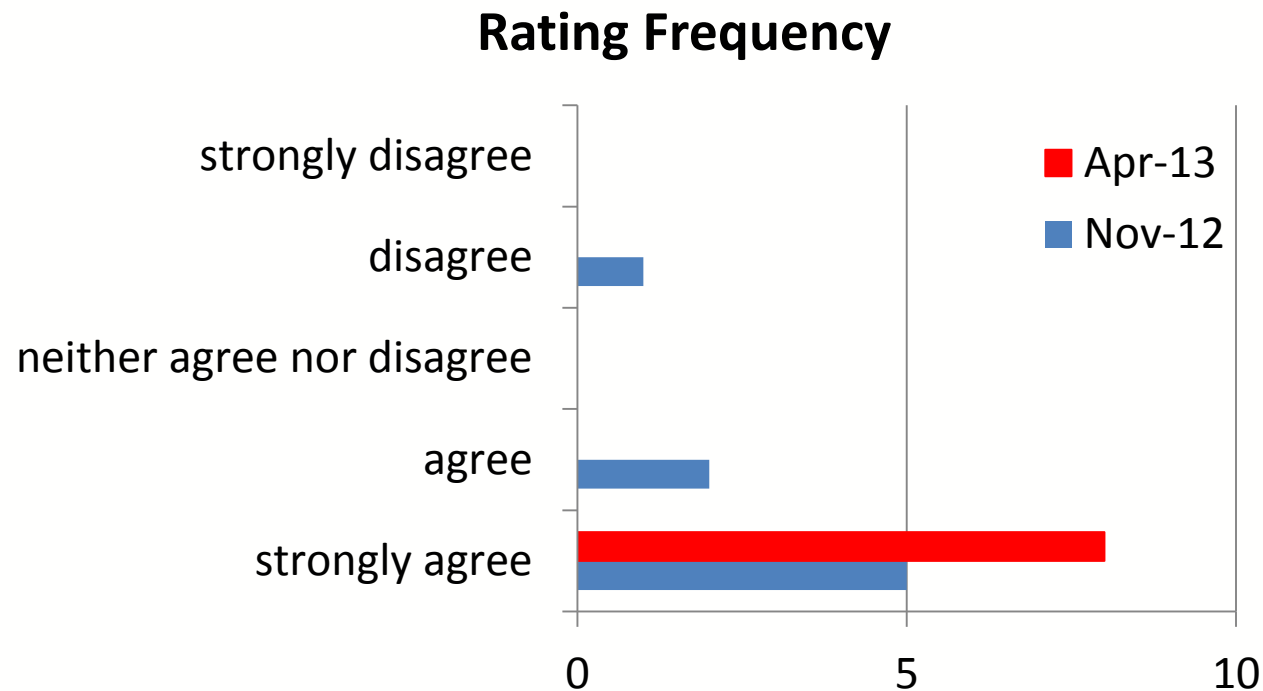
I feel supported in my job by upper management.

Rating Frequency
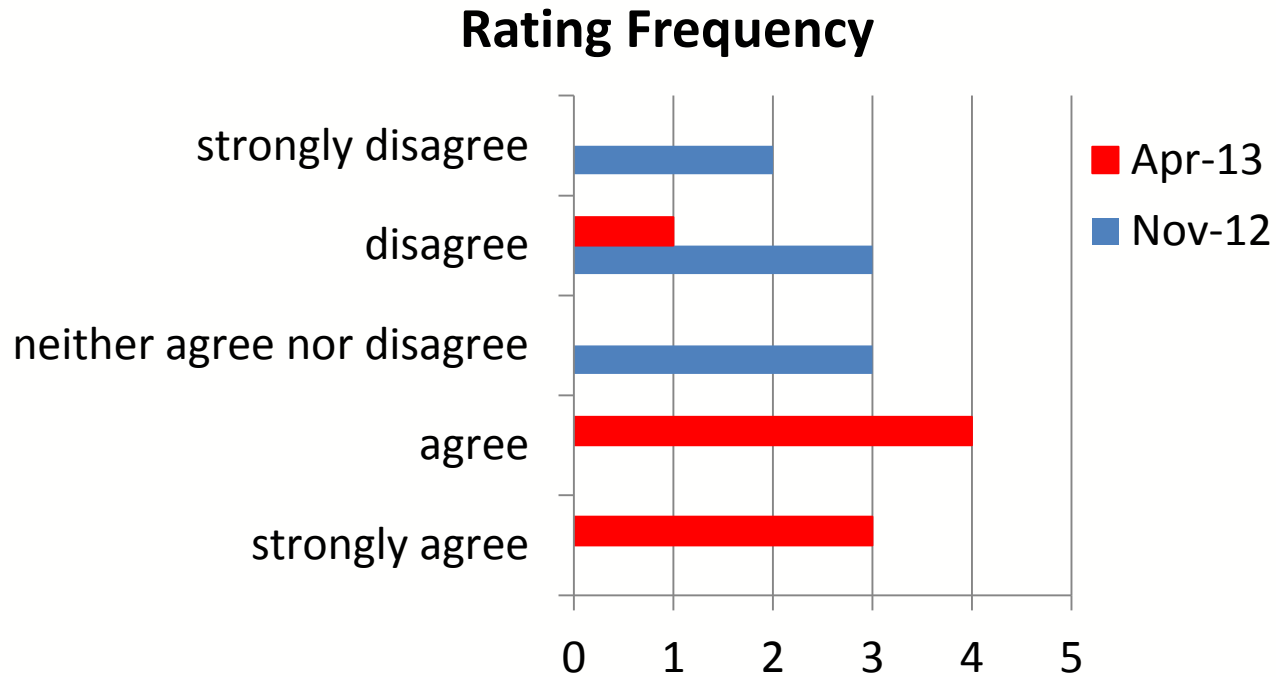
BCBAs provide the best services possible to the clients served

Rating Frequency
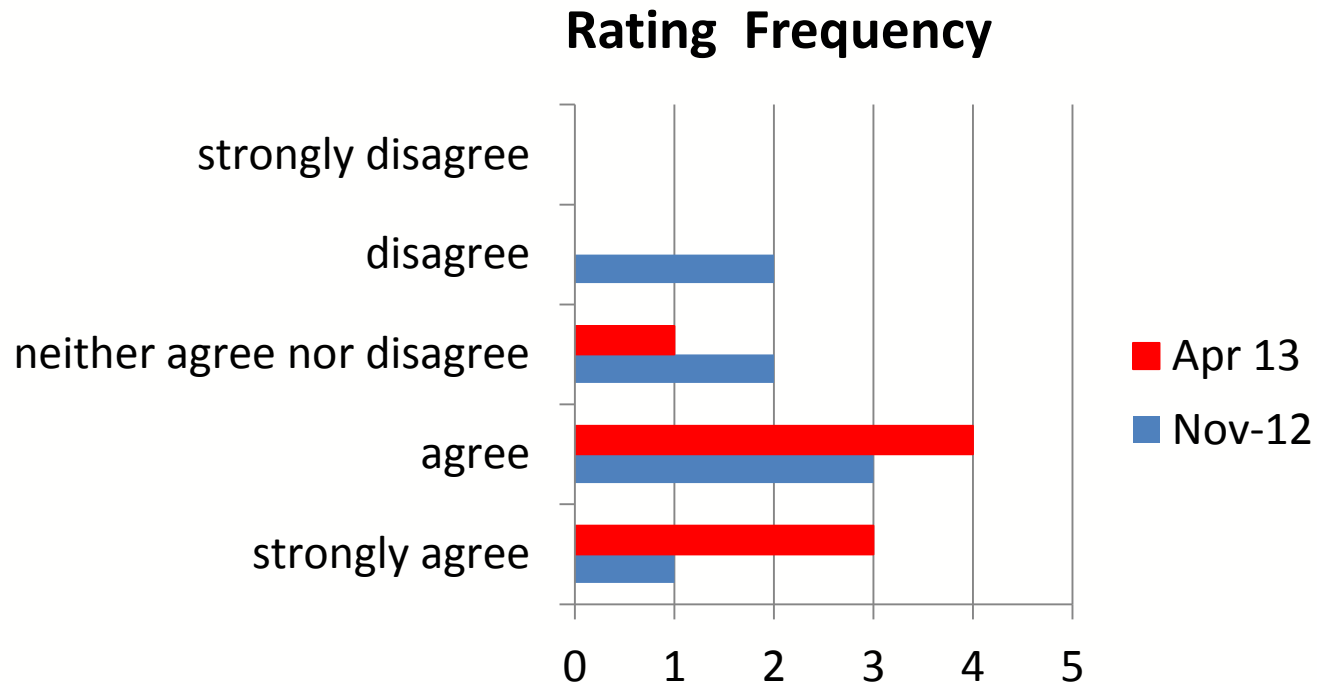
I have considered looking for another job while working at AIS.

Rating Frequency

Apr-13
Nov-12
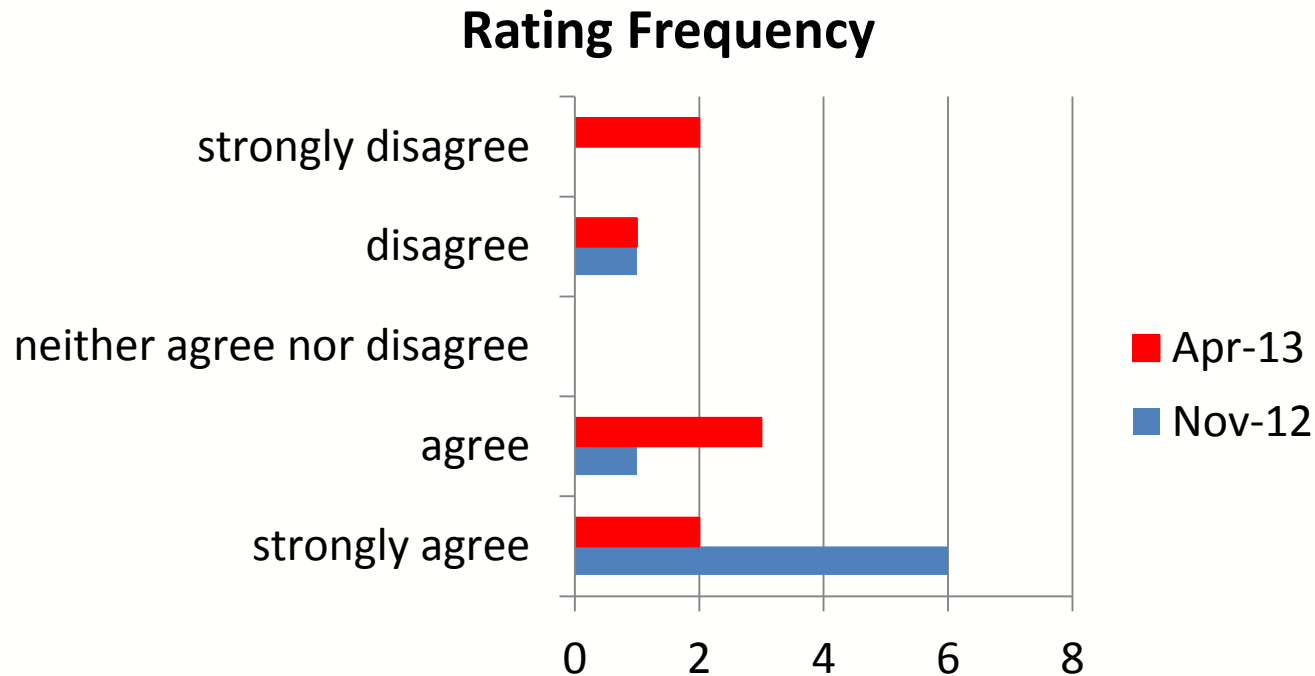
My job is satisfying and fulfilling.

Rating Frequency
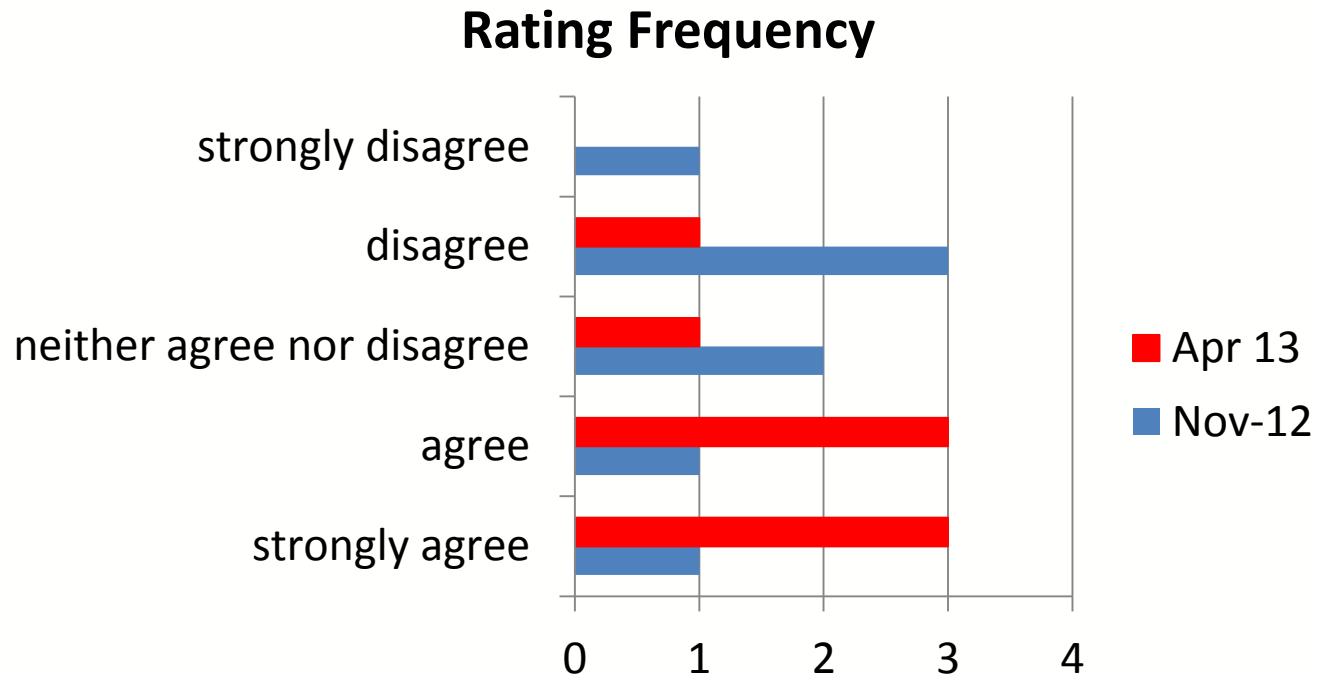
I clearly understand what is expected of me at my work place

Rating Frequency
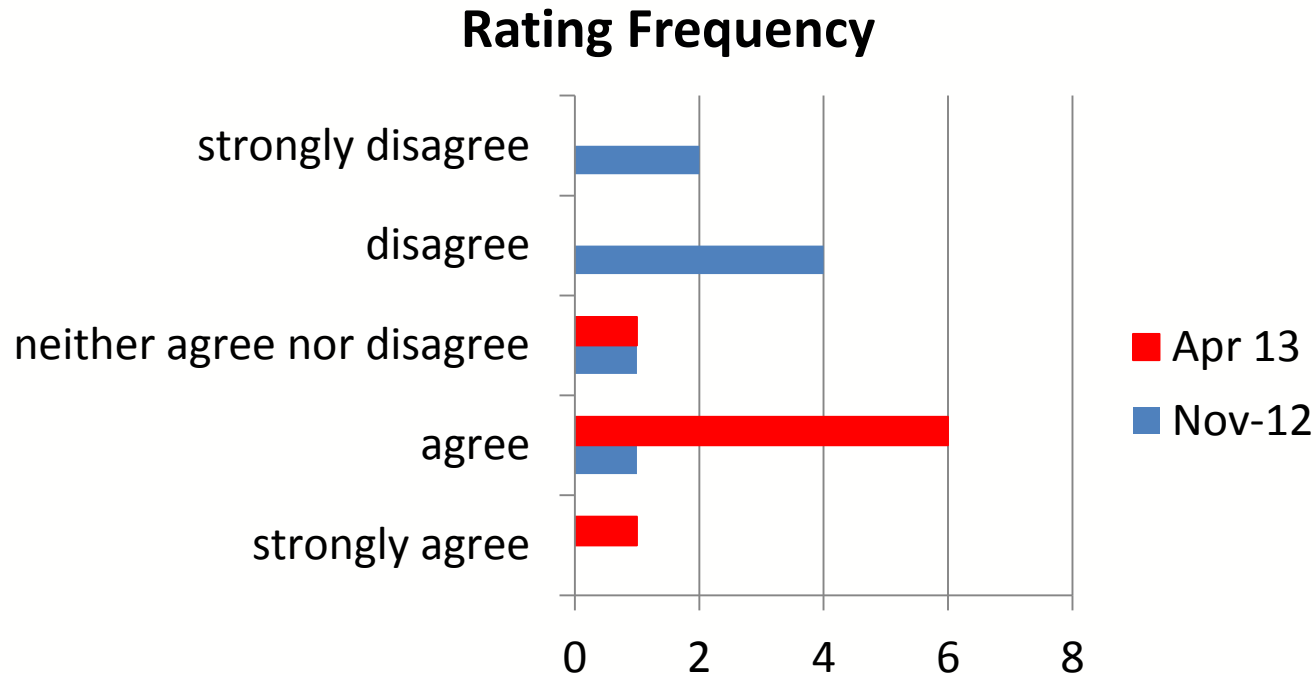
I can complete the required billable hours within my work week if I plan well.

Rating Frequency
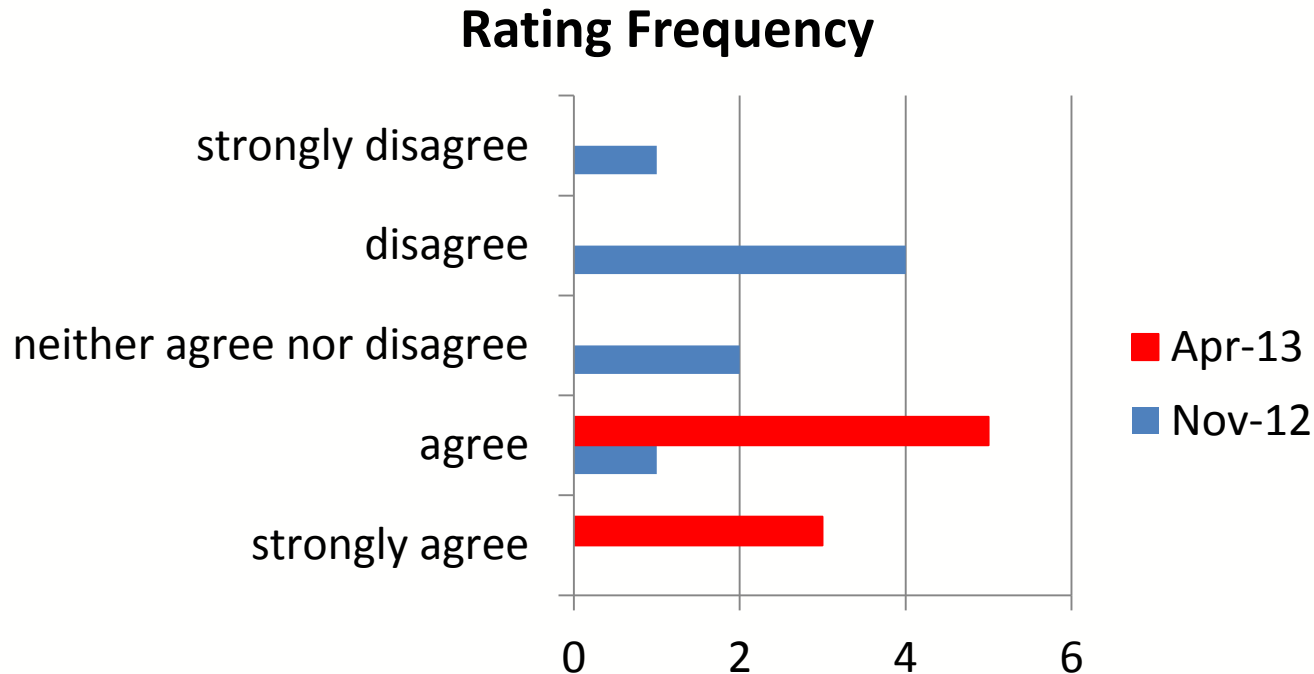
My job gives me a sense of personal satisfaction

Rating Frequency
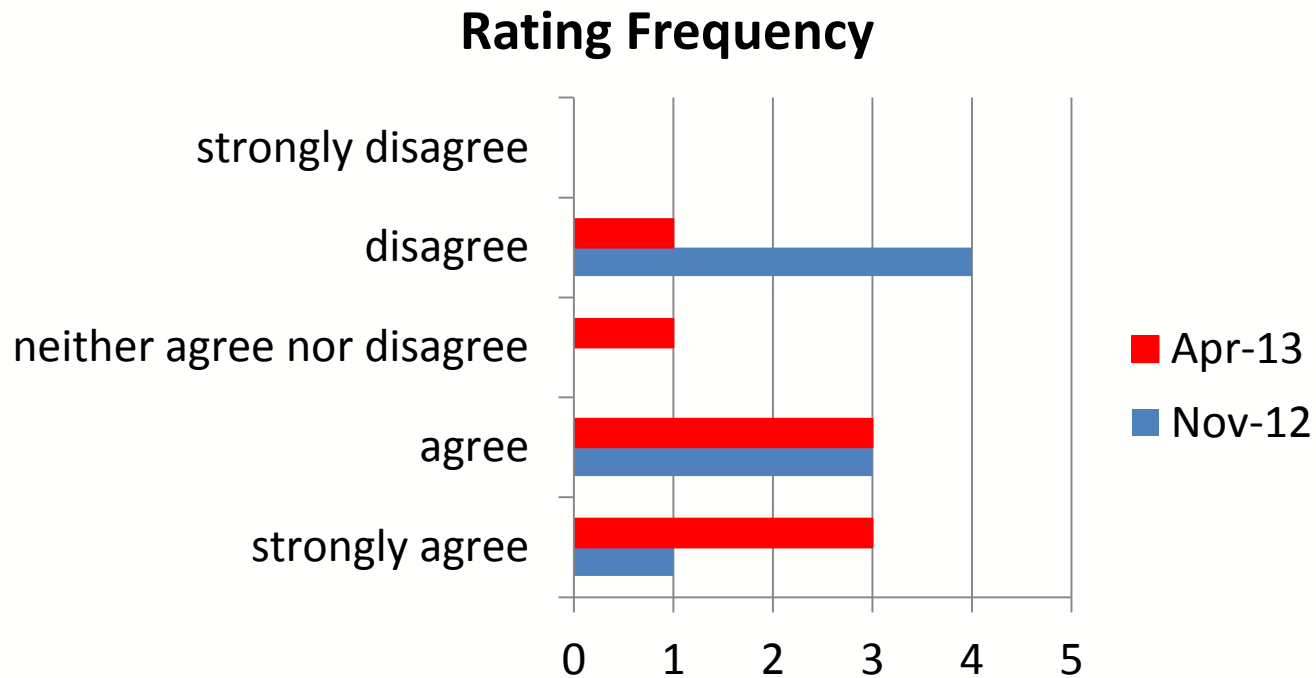
The work I do daily helps improve the lives of the clients

Rating Frequency
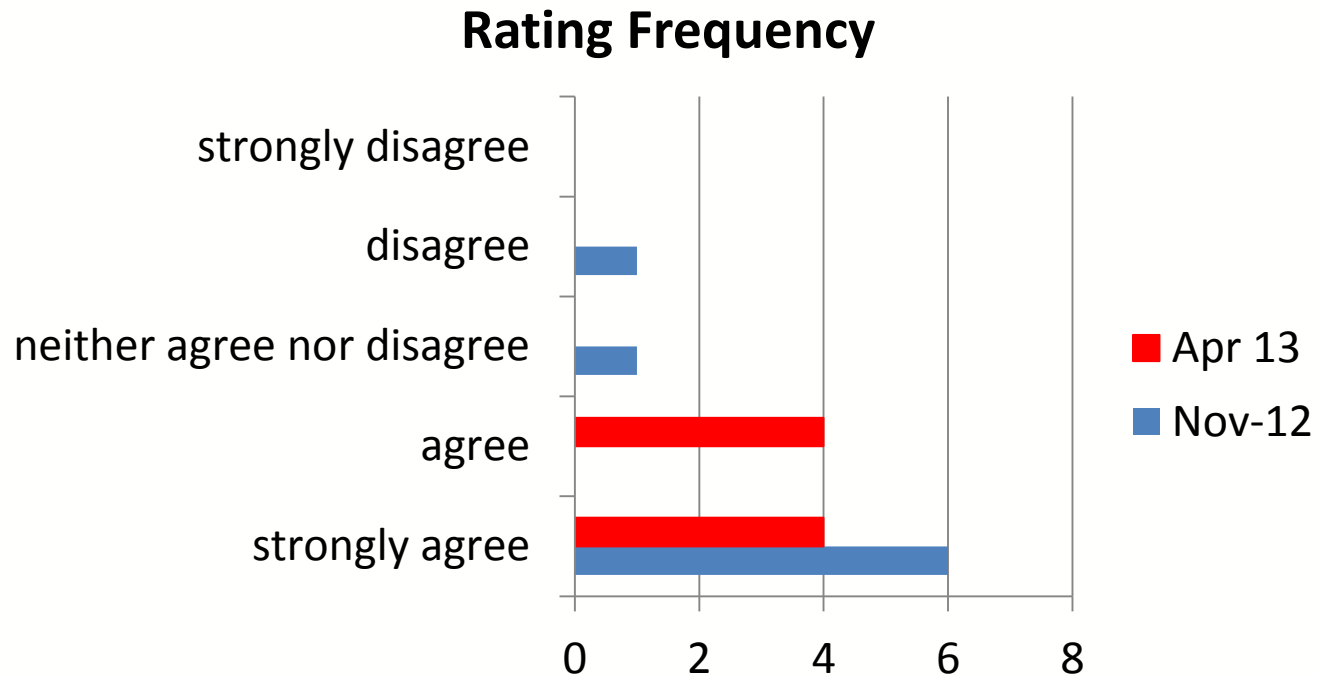
I receive useful instruction from my direct supervisor about my job.

Rating Frequency
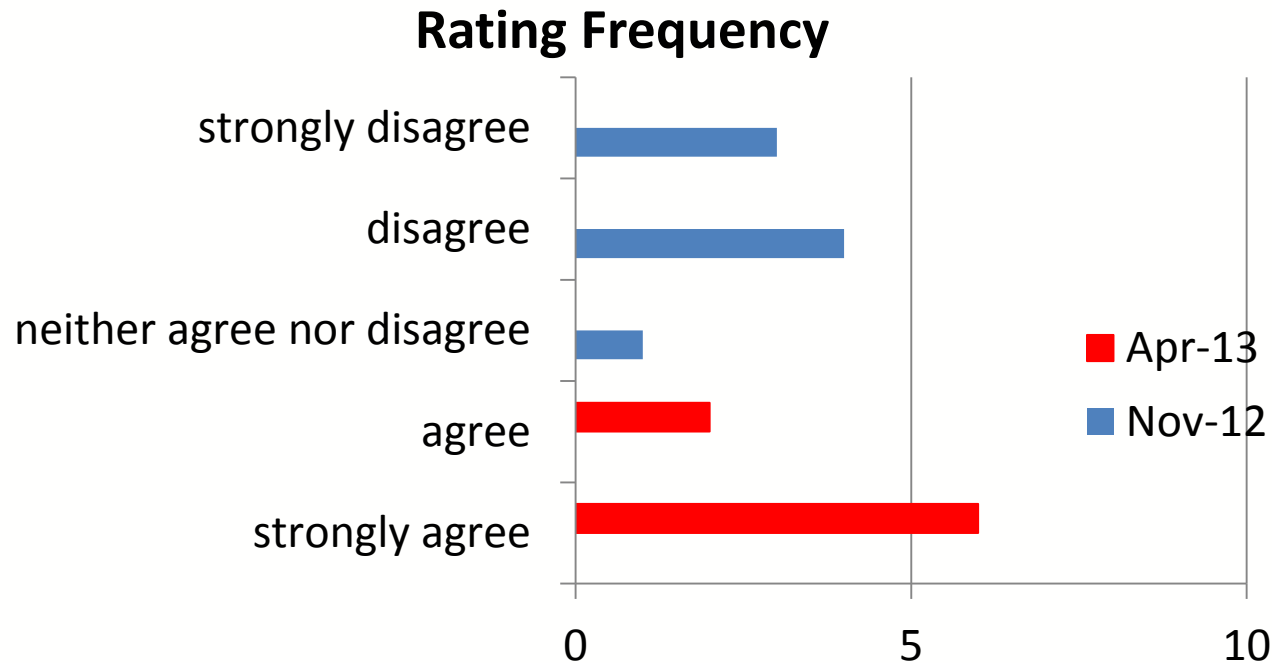
My direct supervisor provides feedback in a constructive ways

Rating Frequency
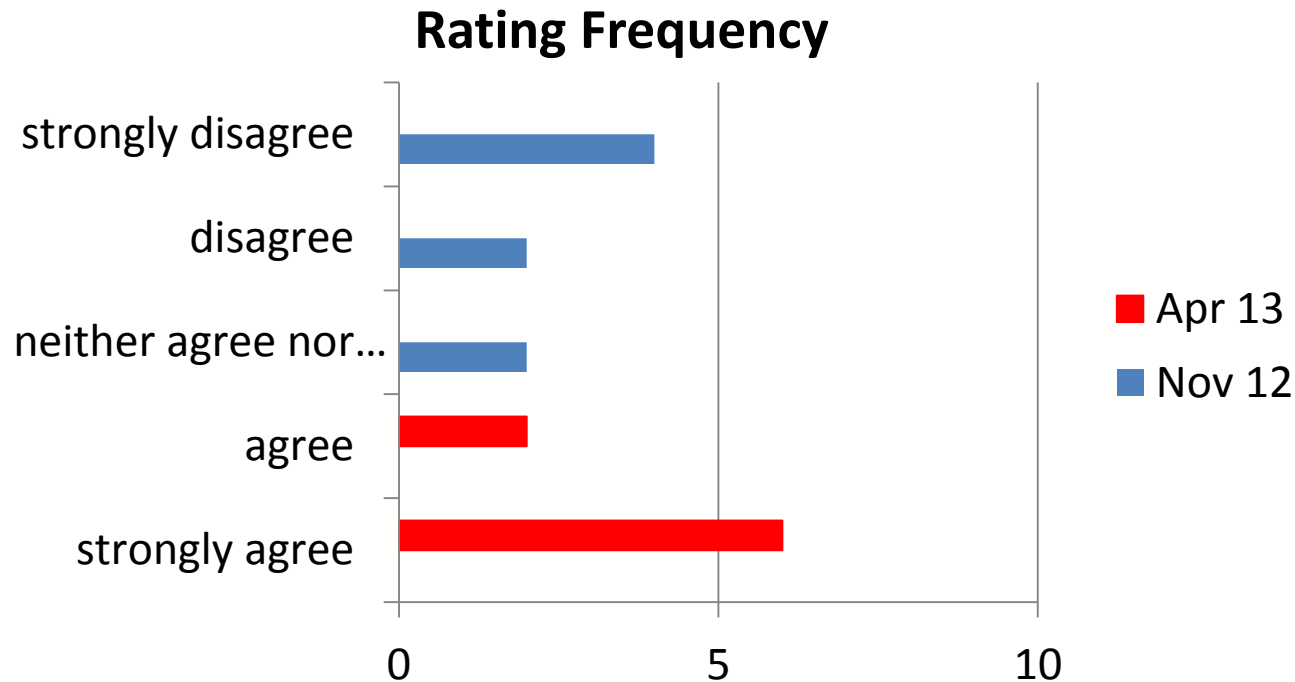
My direct supervisor does a good job of sharing information with me.

Rating Frequency
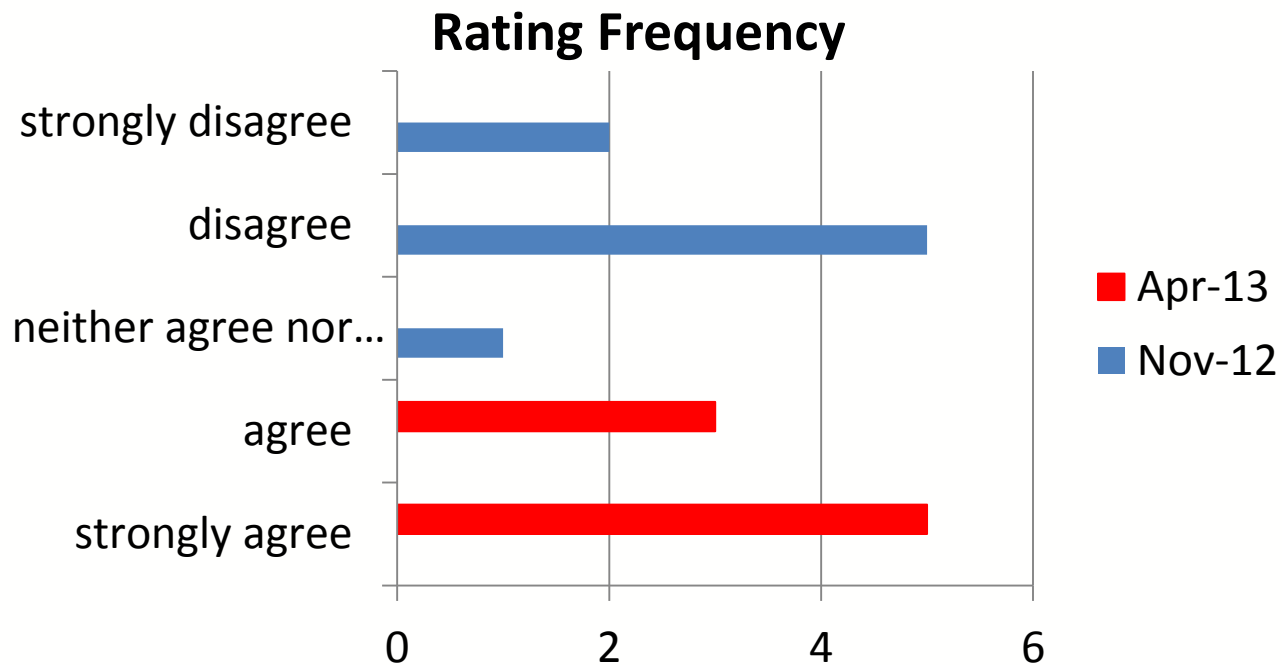
The senior management are accessible and supportive to my needs
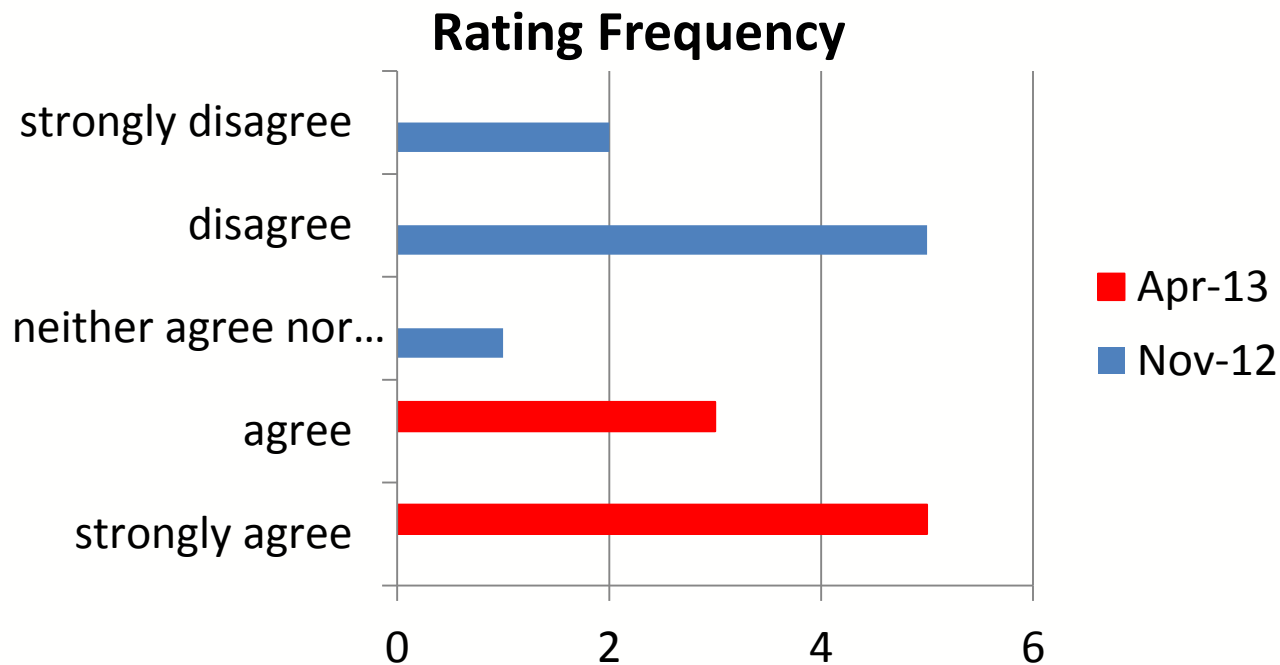
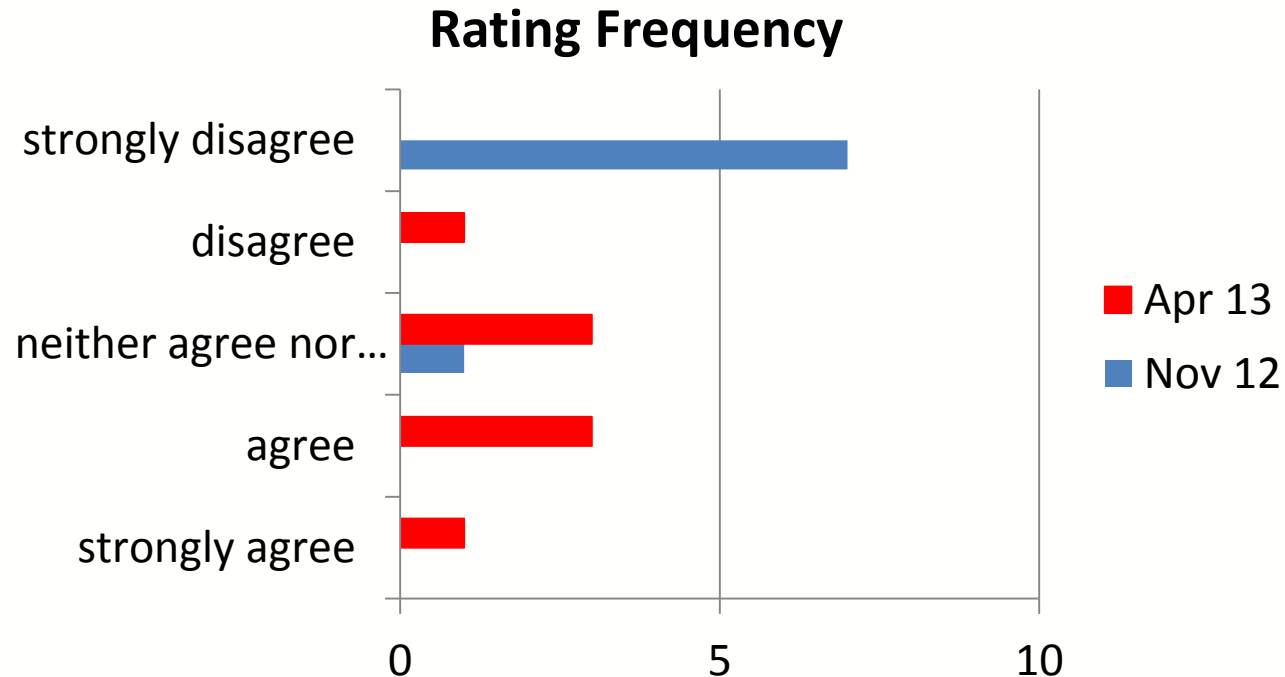# When I do a good job, my direct supervisor provides the praise and recognition I deserve

Rating Frequency
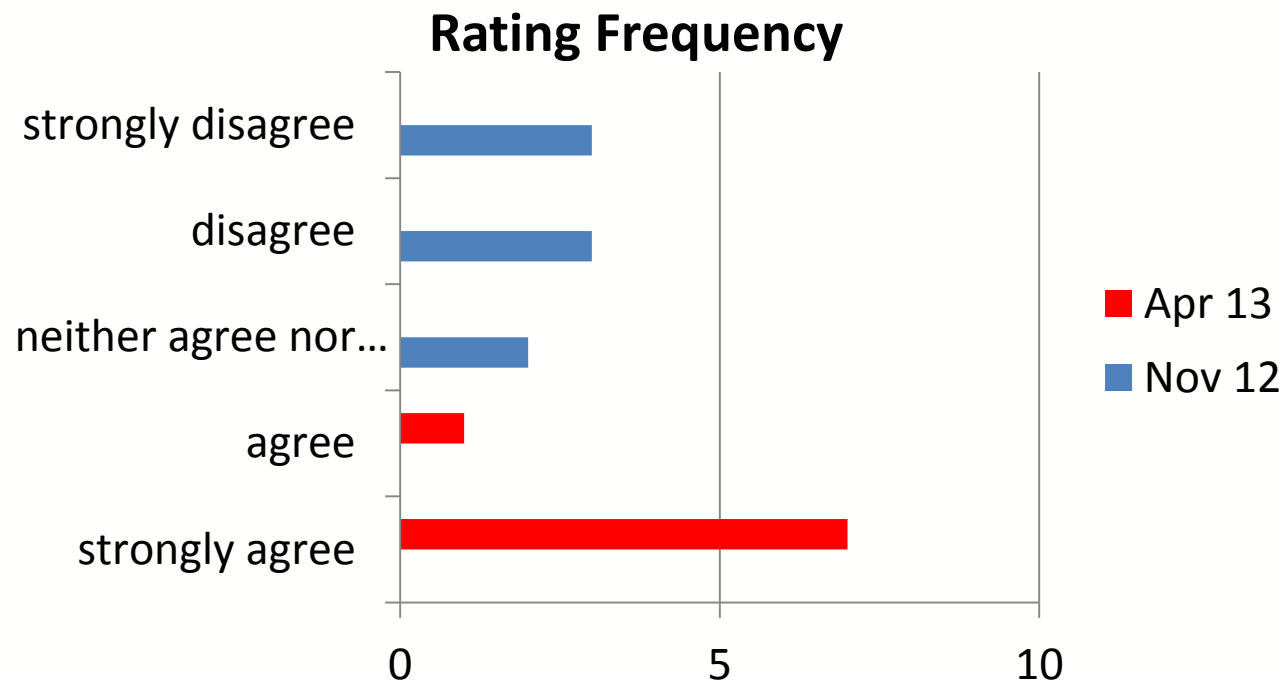
I would recommend working at AIS to a friend

Rating Frequency
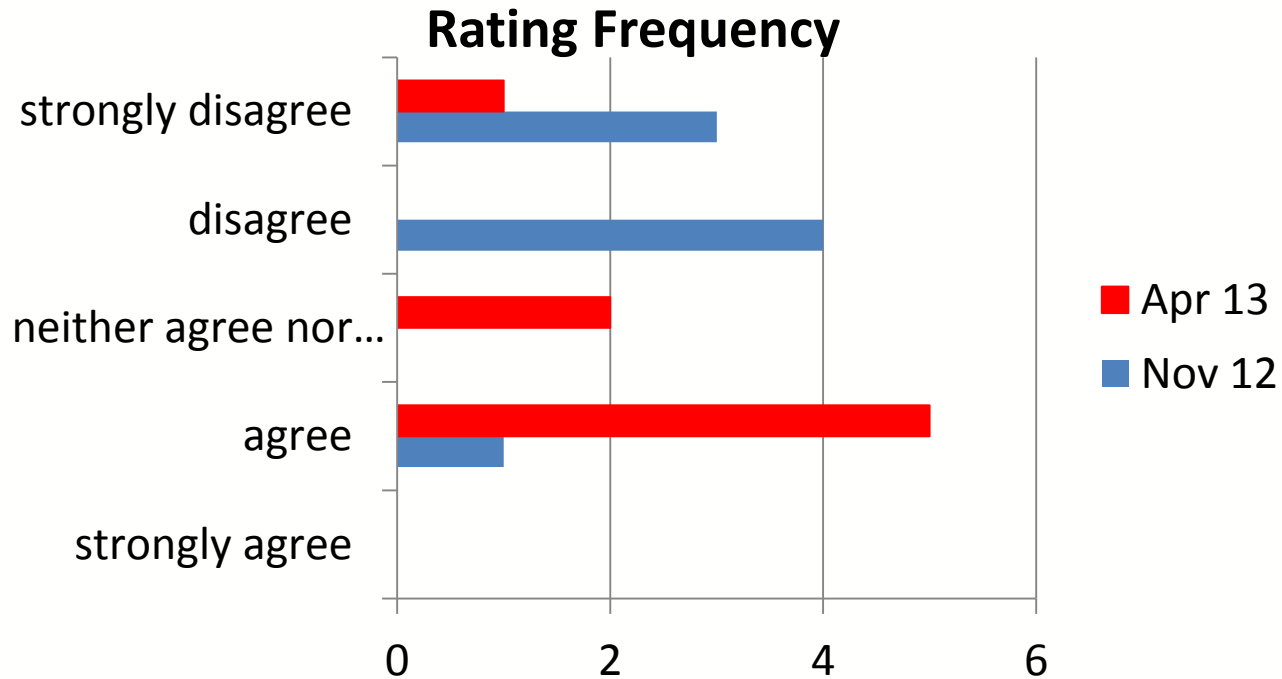
Praise and incentives AIS are distributed fairly
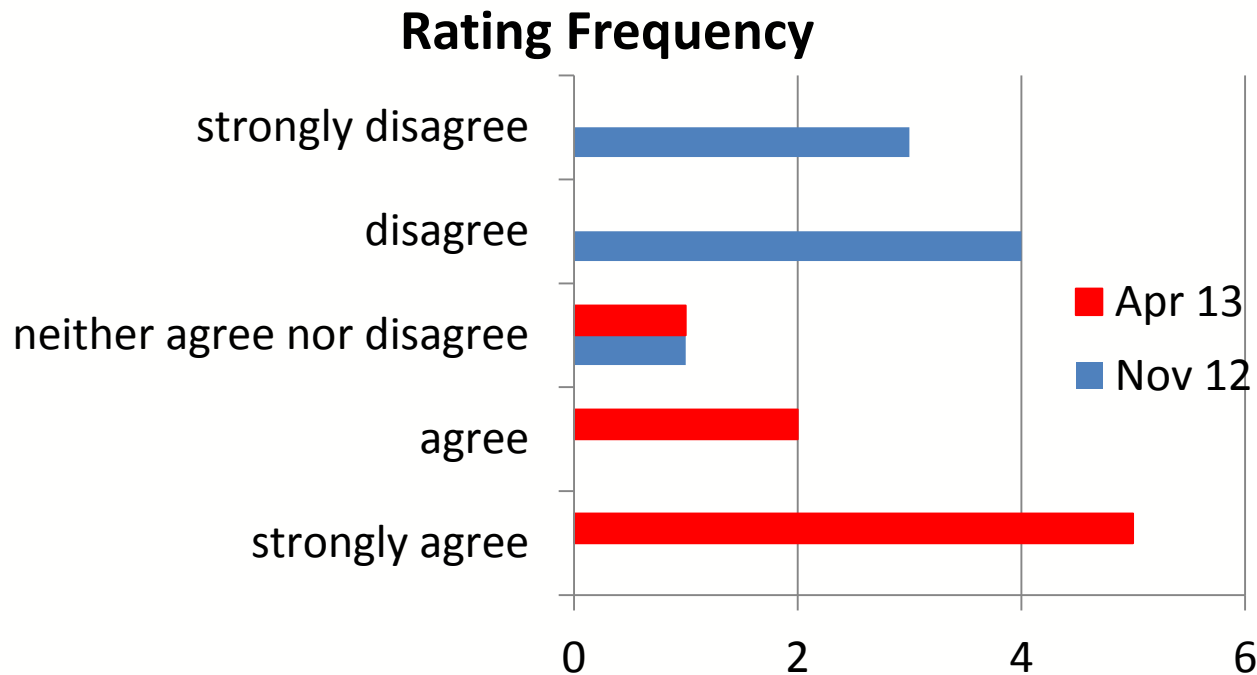
AIS supports a balance between work and personal life

Rating Frequency
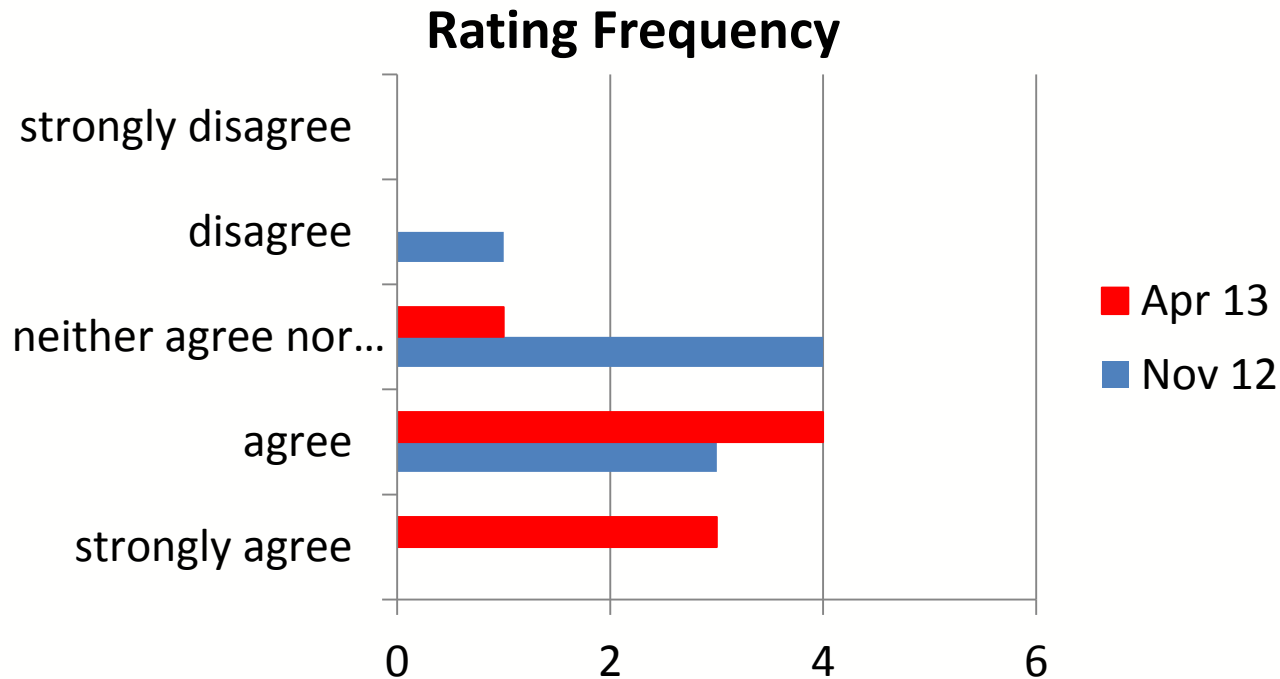
The benefits at AIS are fair and competitive
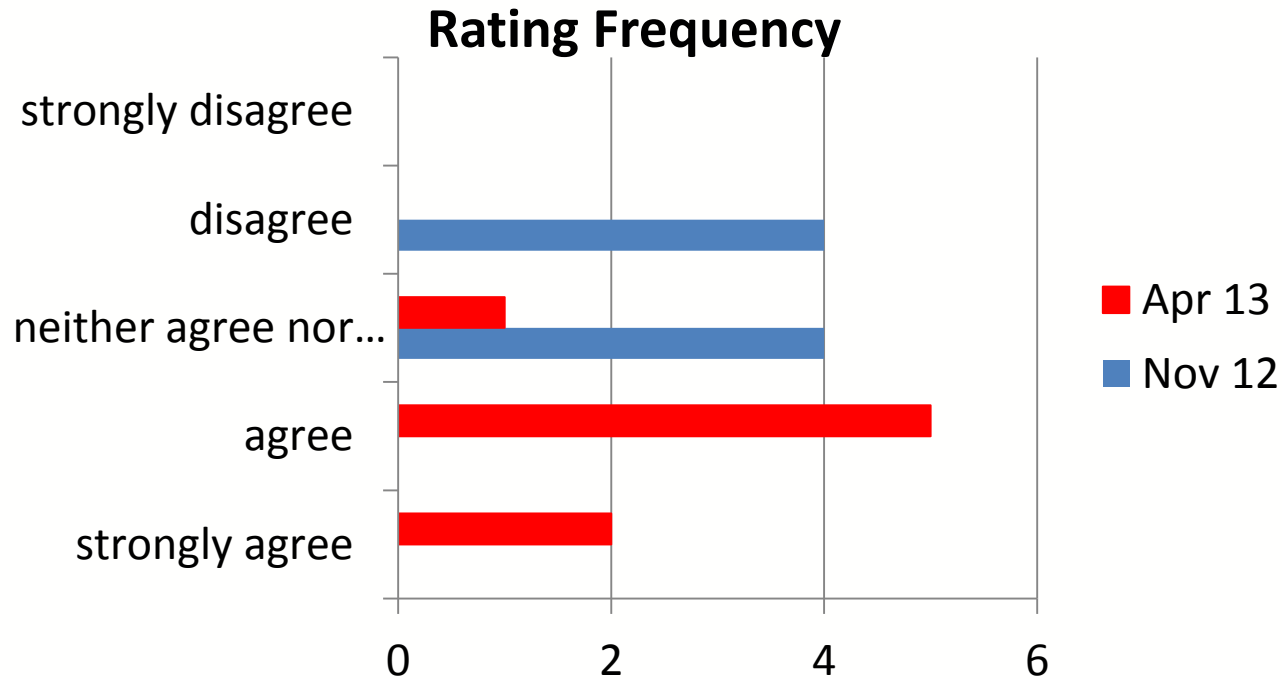
The pay I receive from the AIS is fair and competitive

Conclusions