

# Building and Sustaining an *Effective* Observation Program

## Hey, Did You See That?

*“You can observe a lot by just watching.”*

— Yogi Berra

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Responsibility. What's your policy?®



# Let's Make This Real!

There are simply too many people online right now to make this really interactive. To help close that gap some, please:

- **Have *your* observation checklists handy**
  - **Or download one or more of the sample checklists**
- If you don't have a formal observation process, **relax**; *we all do this everyday at some level or another*
- Challenge what is said
- Take part in the polls

***Download examples if you don't have your own now!***

# Baseline Poll

Select the answer that best fits your organization right now:

1. We are all over the board with observation variance and have virtually no control over it
2. We do have a good amount of observation variance in our system but don't know what to do
3. We do have a little bit of observation variance in our system but it's a lot better than it was before
4. We recognized the problems with observation variance and have eliminated almost all of it

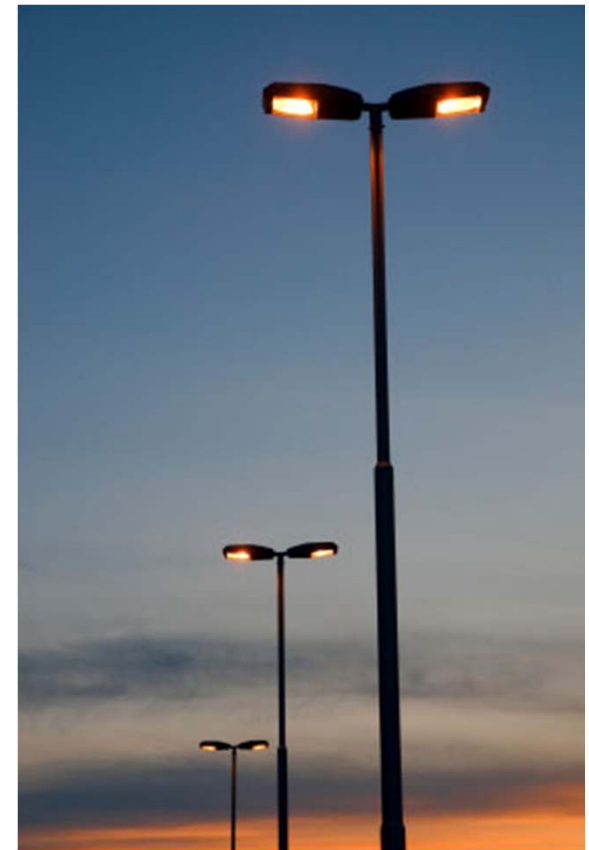
# Observation Bias

An observational bias occurs when observers only look where they think they will find **positive results**, or where it is **easy** to record observations. This is called the “**streetlight effect**”.



# Streetlight Effect

A policeman sees a drunk man searching for something under a streetlight and asks what the drunk has lost. He says he lost his keys and they both look under the streetlight together. After a few minutes the policeman asks if he is sure he lost them here, and the drunk replies, no, that he lost them in the park. The policeman asks why he is searching here, and the drunk replies, *“this is where the light is.”*



# Observer Effect



How people change their behavior when they are aware of being watched.

# Other Sources of Observation Noise

Observation noise occurs **naturally**. However, the opportunity for variance can be impacted by:

- “Management guidance”
- Cultural norms and expectations
- Misuse of data
- Observation time
- Recognition and reward systems
- Checklist format
- Report card hangover
- Wording and quantity of the behavioral expectations

# Problems with Observation Noise

Observation noise **hurts**. What's worse is when the impact is unrecognized or understated in the:

- Decisions that are made from the data
- Cost of observations
- Selection or retirement of behavioral expectations
- Survival rates of BBS programs
- Understanding of resident risk
- Success stories we tell
- Well intentioned competition
- *People we are charged to protect*



# Follow Up Poll

Select the answer that best fits your organization right now:

1. We are all over the board with observation variance and have virtually no control over it
2. We do have a good amount of observation variance in our system but don't know what to do
3. We do have a little bit of observation variance in our system but it's a lot better than it was before
4. We recognized the problems with observation variance and have eliminated almost all of it

# What You Already Know Poll

Select the answer that best fits you right now:

1. I am not a parent
2. I am a parent and it's making me old before my time
3. I am a parent and I think I'm losing my mind
4. I am a parent and it's hard work
5. I am a parent and never have a problem getting the kid(s) to do what they are supposed to do

# A Sampling of Stupid Parent Tricks

- Go ask you father/mother
- You can't go out and play with the kids until you clean your room
- Be careful
- Stop running in the house
- Just do what you did before
- I don't like what you are thinking
- You just wait until you get home
- Drop the attitude
- One... Two...

# SMART Expectations

The goal is to write expectations that can be **observed, defined, measured, and managed.**

As such, **SMART** Expectations are...

Specific

Measurable

Active

Reliable

Tangible

***Don't forget to download supporting material on this topic***

# SMART Expectations - Specific

## Specific

- **Describes exactly** the what, when, where, and how
- Does not assume anything
  - Written as if it is intended for someone totally unfamiliar with the operation

# SMART Expectations - Specific

## Specific

### Example

- Not Specific – “Handle file folders only one time”
  - Does not say who is supposed to do it
  - Does not say when it will be done
- Specific – “Customer Service Rep handles a customer file folder one time when creating custom reports”
  - Says who should do it
  - Says when it should be done

# SMART Expectations - Measurable

## Measurable

- It's **directly observable**
- The behavior you want or condition you want to create happens under normal operations
- Special circumstances would not be required to witness the behavior or condition

# SMART Expectations - Measurable

## Measurable

### Example

- Not Measurable – “Shift Manager activates alarm and evacuates staff in the event of a fire”
  - In order to measure, an observer would have to be there when it happened
  - By definition, a fire is not “normal operations”
- Measurable – “Managers can explain procedures to be followed in fire emergencies”
  - While still not observable, you can assess knowledge during normal operations



# SMART Expectations - Active

## Active

- Will not exist without action by someone
- The behavior you want or condition you want to create cannot be accomplished by a dead body or a rock
- Stated in the positive – the expectation should describe what you do want to happen, not what you don't

# SMART Expectations - Active

## Active

### Example

- Not Active – “Operator does not place hands in machine”
  - Describes an unwanted behavior/condition
  - Does not describe what is expected to be done
- Active – “Operator’s hands are free from moving parts and pinch points when machine is in operation”
  - Requires somebody to do something
  - It is stated objectively as a positive act

# SMART Expectations - Reliable

## Reliable

- It is clear, concise, and to the point
- 2 different people would come to the **same conclusion** of what's being done
- Statement doesn't have ambiguous adverbs or adjectives (quickly, slowly, safely, etc)

# SMART Expectations - Reliable

## Reliable

### Example

- Not Reliable – “Driver maintains adequate following distance for road conditions”
  - Requires an observer to make a judgment call
  - It’s really more of a hope than an expectation
- Reliable – “Driver follows vehicle ahead by 6 seconds on dry pavement and 12 seconds on wet/snowy pavement”
  - This condition can be timed
  - The behavior is clear, objective, and repeatable

# SMART Expectations - Tangible

## Tangible

- It's able to be appraised
- Needs to be able to be assessed by a “yes” or “no”
  - “Yes” would indicated that the desired condition or behavior is being met

# SMART Expectations - Tangible

## Tangible

### Example

- Not Tangible – “Employee always picks up spilled ice”
  - It may not be clear what is supposed to happen (to either the employee or the person observing them)
  - The word “always” is impossible to know
- Tangible – “Employee cleans up ice cube spills on the floor at the ice machine within 2 minutes”
  - The point at which the expected behavior/condition occurs is defined

# Avoid The Traps

- Four simple tips for avoiding expectation traps:
  - Avoid words that end in “ly”
    - They make the statement *less specific* and open to interpretation
  - Avoid words that end in “er” or “est”
    - They make the statement *less specific* and open to interpretation
  - Avoid absolutes (“all”, “always”, “never”)
    - They aren’t *tangible* (impossible to answer “yes/no” to)
  - Avoid negatives (“does not” or “is not”)
    - They aren’t *active* – they can be achieved without doing anything

***Don't forget to download supporting material on this topic***

# One of the Worst, One of the Best

Avoids twisting while carrying packages

The load stays over the toes



# Assuring Validity

Checklists can be SMART, have high reliability scores, and address the **WRONG** behaviors and conditions.

Webster's Dictionary defines validity as the quality of being: 1. Founded on **truth or fact**, *well grounded*; 2. Binding in law, **sound**; 3. Appropriate for the **end in view**, *effective*.

***Don't forget to download supporting material on this topic***

# Golfing with Bill



# The Critical Few

Not the **trivial many**.

Don't be Bill.

1. Respect all people
2. Use your manners
3. Tell the truth

# The Rules

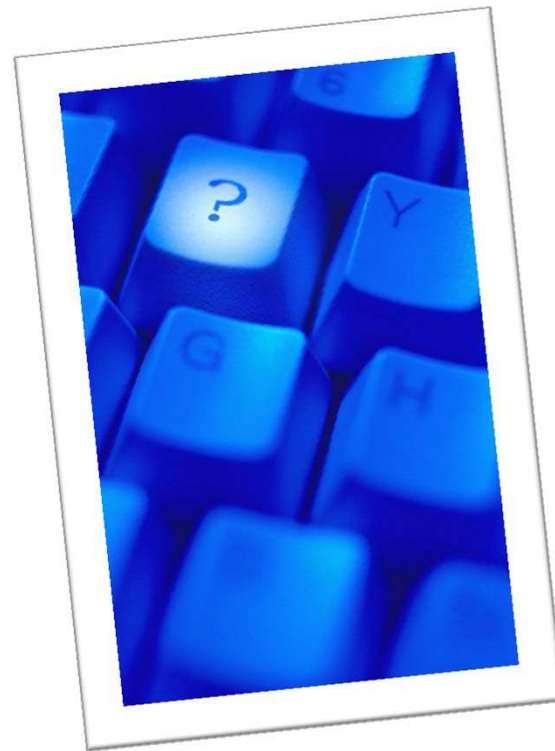
1. What can be *directly observed* can be *objectively defined*.
2. What can be *objectively defined* can be *accurately measured*.
3. What can be *accurately measured* can be *effectively managed*.

# Closing Thoughts

- If your organization has an observation process, examine what you **see**, and its **impact**:
  - Recognize variance or observation noise and reduce it
  - Be willing to identify and settle for the “critical few”
  - Be SMART about your behavioral expectations; understand that you are defining what safe looks like
  - Natural performance for most activities is around 50%; don’t expect (or fudge) much more than that



# Questions and Comments



# Get Your Access to a Wealth of Risk Reduction Help Available 24/7

The screenshot shows the Liberty Mutual website interface. At the top right, there are links for 'Liberty Mutual | Contact Us | Research Institute' and a search bar. The main navigation includes 'Liberty Mutual.', 'SafetyNet', and 'Loss Control Advisory Services'. The 'MyServices' section features the email [customerservicecenter@libertymutual.com](mailto:customerservicecenter@libertymutual.com) and the phone number 800-845-8075. Below this, the 'National Connection' section features the email [nmsupport@libertymutual.com](mailto:nmsupport@libertymutual.com) and the phone number 800-362-0000. A large 'LCAS' watermark is visible in the background.

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