

FIELD TOOLS:
THE FAMILY OF INTERVENTIONS
JOB AID

I find it helpful to classify the different types of interventions in “families.” Otherwise the list of all the interventions that organizations could possibly implement would be long and unmanageable. I initially settled on thirteen families, but for this edition have expanded the list to fifteen, sorted into five groups. Each family of interventions has a unique label (see Figure 8.2) that quickly communicates the purpose or reason for the intervention. The label tells you what a specific activity or program is supposed to accomplish. It helps me identify the appropriate action or set of actions to improve performance, stay focused on what I’m trying to accomplish, and not overlook supporting interventions. The labels do something else as well: they help me establish credibility because I have a method for sorting, comparing, and selecting the most appropriate intervention. I use Figure 8.2 as a job aid and share it with clients.

Figure 8.1. Interventions at the Individual, Work Group, Department, and Division Levels

Interventions designed to improve individual performance

- Redesigning a job or workstation to accommodate physical limitations
- Allowing a flextime work schedule
- Permitting job sharing
- Providing personal financial or family counseling through an employee assistance program
- Installing electronic performance support systems

Interventions designed to shape or improve work group and team performance

- Adopting agile manufacturing practices
- Making cross-training available
- Implementing self-directed work teams
- Offering diversity training
- Holding competitions
- Building identity through department slogans or uniforms

Interventions designed to improve the performance of whole departments and divisions

- Adopting uniform standards
- Replacing traditional compensation structures with job banding
- Creating vision and mission statements
- Installing intranet and e-mail systems

- Giving business units accountability for profit and loss

Interventions to improve the performance of major divisions, subsidiaries, and even whole companies

- Selling off a product line, plant, or division
- Buying or merging with another division or company
- Decentralizing and centralizing staff functions
- Consolidating functions
- Reengineering major cross-functional processes, such as order-to-ship processes
- Outsourcing functions
- Adopting a new logo or corporate name

Interventions designed to improve society as a whole or specific groups

- Engaging in political and social advocacy to push for the enactment of laws and influence judicial and legislative actions
- Providing health care services
- Providing emergency care, including medical services, housing, and transportation
- Volunteering time and expertise to provide educational, health care, and social services
- Donating cars, clothing, housing, money, toys, medical equipment, unused frequent flyer miles, and the like to people in need