

Self-management with Self-reinforcement: The Fitbit Phenomenon

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INTRODUCTION

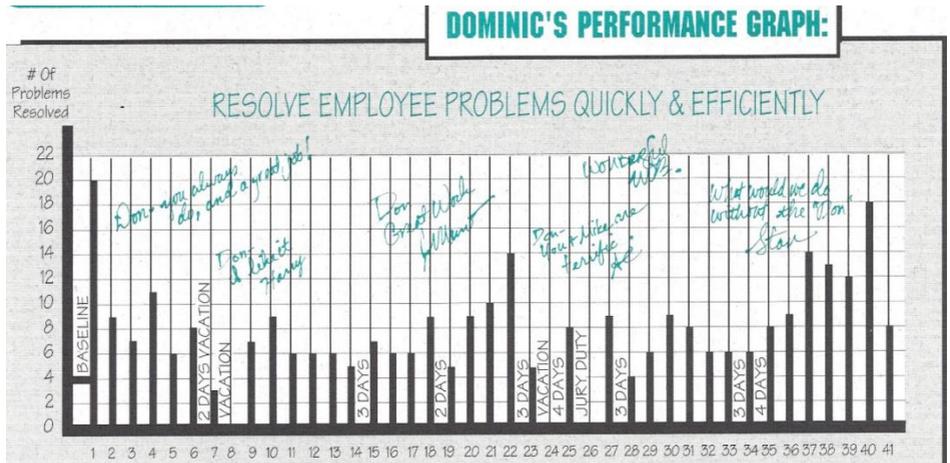
Most people like to experience a feeling of accomplishment. When a person works solo, or in a remote location from his or her co-workers, how can we arrange for that person to both perform “accomplishment” behaviors, and then to receive the positive reinforcement that we know will keep those behaviors coming?

The tools to achieve solo accomplishment and reinforcement are:

1. A self-tracking tool created by collaborating with the employee
2. A schedule for that person’s supervisor to review the data and give positive reinforcement, creating the expectation that the solo worker can feel proud when he’s alone, knowing that his supervisor will express pride in his accomplishment later

Think of your own “to-do” list. How do you feel when you can strike something off your list as completed? Or your exercise tracker: think how good you feel when you look at your steps and see that you’re close to your daily goal, or exceeding it? You can coach your solo performer to design a feedback tool that makes self-reinforcement easy and leads to pride in self-tracking his or her accomplishments.

SAMPLE SELF-TRACKING TOOLS: THE FOLLOWING WERE CREATED BY LONE PERFORMERS AND ARE MAINTAINED BY HAND

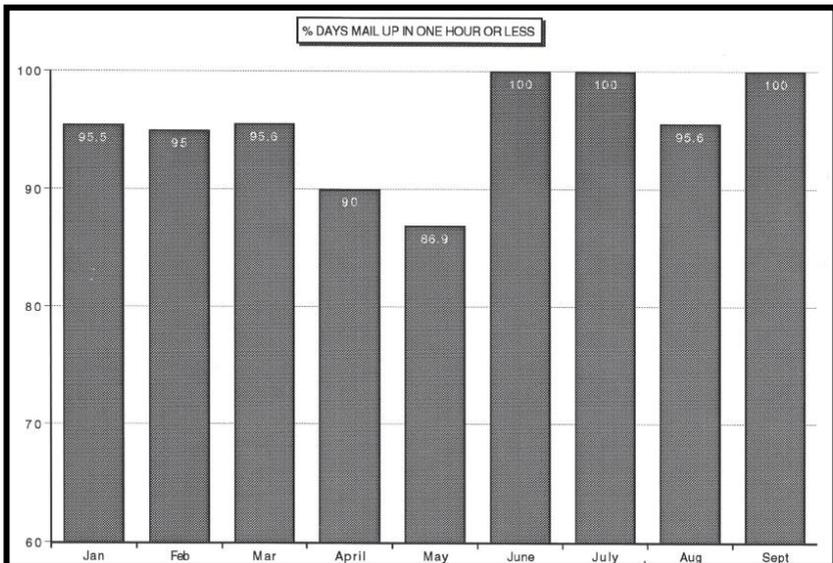
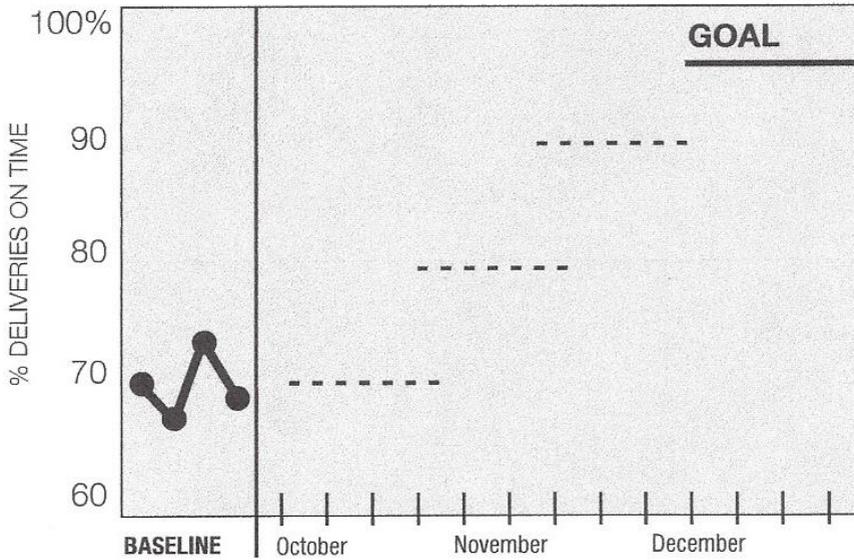


PERFORMANCE MATRIX

Name Chris Patterson Position Project Director Manager Carl Becker Date June 1992

	SUCCESS MEASURES	SUBGOALS			GOAL	OVERACHIEVEMENT		X WEIGHT	POINTS
		4	6	8	10	12	13		
1	Percent of projects completed on-budget	80%	85%	90%	95%	98%	100%	25%	250
2	Number of new client visits or contacts	3	5		6	7	8	20%	200
3	Percent of projects on-time	85%	90%	95%	100%	5% <i>done early</i>	10% <i>done early</i>	25%	150
4	Delegation and training: # new activities given to staff	1			2		3	10%	40
5	Average billable hours per week	25	26	28	30	35	40	20%	260

% ON-TIME DELIVERIES



COACH LONE PERFORMERS TO CREATE AND TRACK THEIR OWN PERFORMANCE

1. To help an employee create a self-tracking tool, sit down with him or her and ask, “What would you like to measure, that demonstrates your success on your job?”
2. Be prepared to offer some ideas and show examples (above), for example:
 - a. on-time deliveries
 - b. Response to customers’ requests within ___ hours
 - c. % of today’s goal tasks completed
 - d. Safety observations
3. Work with the employee to design his or her checklist, graph, or matrix. Ask the employee to do all the drawing. You give coaching, but **KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF**. This is the most important part of this process. Why?
4. Set up a time within one week to refine the self-management tool. Ask the employee to think about what is being measured and decide if it’s the right measurement (something that is under his control and is a key indicator of success).

GET THE SELF-REINFORCEMENT STARTED BY GIVING REINFORCEMENT

Giving reinforcement will give the lone performer the expectation of reinforcement from you and others (The Fitbit Phenomenon)

1. Reinforce the lone performer for completing the design of the self-tracking tool.
2. Check with the person 2-3 days after he or she begins to use the self-tracker. Reinforce any report of collecting data and/or posting it.
3. Ask the person to email his graph or chart to you on a specific date approximately (one week from now).
4. Email, text, or call the lone performer to reinforce the posting of data.
5. Reinforce at least weekly for one month.
6. If the data is improving or maintaining at a satisfactory level, ask the person to send you her data whenever she wishes. Reinforce her for keeping data, the performance itself, and for sending you her data.
7. Thin the schedule of reinforcement as long as the performance maintains at a satisfactory level.
8. Ask the lone performer to share her tracking tool with others.

SUMMARY

This process includes:

1. A self-tracking tool
2. A positive reinforcement plan

This is a shaping plan which has the supervisor coach the lone employee to become engaged in:

1. Pinpointing
2. Measurement
3. Self-feedback
4. Schedules of reinforcement

This process creates self-management with self-reinforcement for lone performers, just the same as users of trackers such as Fitbit willingly engage in exercise behaviors and receive reinforcement by looking at their data, and sometimes proudly sharing their data with other people, for extra reinforcement.

(These graphs were originally published in Thumbs Up, the newsletter of Performance Leadership Consulting.)

THE AUTHOR



Janis Allen, founder of Performance Leadership Consulting (operating since 1991), is the former Vice President of Operations and Performance Management Consultant for Aubrey Daniels International. Her clients have included BMW Manufacturing, 3M, International Paper, Xerox, Kodak, Atlas Precision Manufacturing, Champion Credit Union, Columbia Forest Products, Crane Resistoflex Manufacturing, Department of the Army Finance & Accounting,

Excelsior Packaging, First Light Solar, Monsanto Chemicals, Morganton Pressure Vessels, Philadelphia Electric, Quiagen Biotech, Stephens Federal Bank, Tektone Sound & Signal, Tindall Pre-stressed Concrete Manufacturing, United Airlines, Verizon Wireless, Volvo Construction Equipment, Wisconsin Gas, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Previously, Janis was a plant Human Resource Manager and Corporate Training Manager for Milliken Textile Manufacturing. She has a B.A. degree in Sociology from Furman University in Greenville, S.C. Janis was keynote speaker for the National Association for Employee Recognition (national conference). She presented workshops for Association for Manufacturing Excellence (Cincinnati 2015 and Boston 2017) on employee engagement, involvement, and motivation. Her book, *I Saw What You Did and I Know Who You Are*, has been widely used within Delta Airlines. She is the author of six business books: *Performance Teams: Completing the Feedback Loop*, *Team Up*, *I Saw What You Did and I Know Who You Are*, *You Made My Day* (with Michael McCarthy), *How to Engage, Involve, and Motivate Employees* (with Michael McCarthy), and *Ready? Set? Engage!* (with Michael McCarthy). Janis has also published a history book: *World War II Veterans of Western North Carolina: Their Stories in Their Own Words*. She is a past president of the Brevard Music Center Association and an executive board member of the Western North Carolina Military History Museum (both in Brevard, NC, where she lives).