

Our healthcare organization also uses the methodologies of Gap Analysis and Risk Assessment as tools available to promote improving organizational performance.

**Gap Analysis:**

A gap analysis is a method of assessing performance to determine whether objectives are being met. It is a means to formalize the review of the current state of a selected process and compare it to the future state or vision for that particular process, identify where the gaps lie between the two states and build strategies to eliminate the gap. This can also be referred to as needs analyses or needs assessment.

The "gap" in the gap analysis process refers to the area between "where we are" and "where we want to be". Our organization utilizes the guidance provided by the AHRQ to create the foundational approach to conducting gap analyses. The gap analysis is often performed prior to leadership endorsement of a performance improvement project.

In regulatory or accreditation driven initiatives, a gap analysis can compare what is required by certain regulations with what currently is being done to abide by them.

**Gap Analysis Process:**

- 1- Assemble a small group of stakeholders in the process undergoing analysis.
- 2- Assign a neutral person to lead/facilitate the discussion.
- 3- Establish ground rules regarding equal opportunity to speak and equal weight being given to each shared opinion/suggestion.
- 4- Set expectation for open and honest discussions.
- 5- Share with participants the purpose and goals of the group prior to their joining the group.
- 6- Share with the group that the sessions are confidential.
- 7- Utilize a select set of questions or queries.
- 8- Allow ample time for participants to share their observations, thoughts, contributions.
- 9- Do not exceed the allocated time frame.
- 10- Ensure the participants that the focus is on learning about what is occurring (Current State) with a goal of improving upon the current state.
- 11- The results of the group discussions should result in the organization identifying the following:
  - a. The current state or current process
  - b. The future state or way the process would occur in the perfect world
  - c. Where the gaps between the current state and future state exist
  - d. Strategies to eliminate or reduce the gap
- 12- Results of the Gap Analysis should be reported to the QA-PI Committee in a manner that protects the identity of the individuals and communicates the consensus of the group.
- 13- Gap Analysis Results should be reported in the following format:

Current State	Future State	Identified Gaps	Gap Mitigation Suggestions	Conclusions

- 14- The QA-PI Committee in conjunction with Leaders, determines if the improvement initiative is a priority for the organization.

### **Risk Assessments:**

Utilizing the Risk Assessment approach helps organizations to determine the priority level for action. This is accomplished by determining the risk of harm and the scope of impact.

Risk Assessment Process:

Utilizing a Risk Assessment Matrix:

- 1- Identify hazards (anything that may cause harm e.g., unsecured medications; unsecured entrances and exits to building; use of improperly cleaned/sanitized/sterilized supplies or devices).
- 2- Determine who may be harmed and how that harm may occur.
- 3- Determine the degree of harm that may occur (ranging from minor injury to death).
- 4- Determine the scope of impact (how many persons may be harmed).
- 5- From the assigned values of each category, determine the total value for each hazard.
- 6- Hazards that score a higher value should be given greater priority for resolution than hazards with lower scores.
- 7- Results of the Risk Assessment should be reported to the QA-PI Committee in a manner that protects the identity of the individuals and communicates the results of the assessment.
- 8- The QA-PI Committee in conjunction with Leaders, allocates resources for the improvement efforts needed to mitigate the risks based upon priority level determined from the assessment.
- 9- Organization shall utilize a standardized risk assessment format and scoring process for all risk assessments.