

Critical Incident Technique

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Think back on your work experiences of the past year. What things went especially well? What activities or events didn't work out so well? Are there certain incidents that really stand out in your mind? It is often helpful to examine the most memorable work experiences in order to make the organization more effective as well as to improve one's individual performance.

Try to identify two such events: one that was, in your view, an example of a success and another of an instance where something could have been improved. Focus especially on cases where communication played an important role, either positively or negatively.

Then, answer these questions about each memorable incident. In Section I, identify the successful memorable incident, and use Section II to recall the event where something could have or should have been done differently.

Section I: A successful, memorable incident.

1. What happened, from your point of view?
2. What parties, departments, units, or organizations were involved?
3. Why does this particular incident stand out in your memory?
4. What worked especially well in this case? Please explain.
5. Was there good understanding, communication, or coordination in this case? Please explain.
6. What lessons can you draw from the experience? What might you do similarly or differently if confronted by a similar situation in the future? What would you recommend to other parties involved?
7. What principles or guidelines can you infer from the case?

Section II: An event where something could have or should have been done differently.

1. What happened, from your point of view?
2. What parties, departments, units, or organizations were involved?
3. Why does this particular incident stand out in your memory?
4. What didn't work so well in this case? Please explain.
5. Was there a lack of good understanding, communication, or coordination in this case? Please explain.
6. What lessons can you draw from the experience? What might you do differently or similarly if confronted by a similar situation in the future? What would you recommend to other parties involved?
7. What principles or guidelines can you infer from the case?