

# Sample Needs Assessment Questions

1. What is the current performance of your learners? (actuals) Find proof of what the learners know and can do.
  - a. Can learners do what they say they can do?
  - b. Is there a problem? What is going on that is a problem?
  - c. What errors are occurring?
  - d. What are some problems with \_\_\_\_\_ ?
  - e. What areas of \_\_\_\_\_ need improvement?
  - f. Who thinks there are problems?
  - g. Who doubts there are problems?
  
2. What level of performance do we want? (optimals)
  - a. What ought to be going on?
  - b. What are the desired outcomes or results?
  - c. What standards should the learners be meeting?
  - d. What constitutes a good \_\_\_\_\_ ?
  - e. What is good about \_\_\_\_\_ ?
  - f. What changes in technology will demand new knowledge, skills or attitudes?
  - g. If instruction is the best solution to the problem, where should attention be focused during instruction?
  
3. What are the causes of the problem?
  - a. What is creating or contributing to the problem or discrepancy?
  - b. What do sources think is causing the problem?
  - c. Of the possible causes of problems, what or which is actually causing this problem?
  - d. What are some problems with?
  - e. What are the incentives for doing it right (or the “new” way)?
  - f. What are the incentives for doing it wrong (or the “old” way)?
  
4. What are potential solutions to the problem?
  - a. If the learners already know the knowledge or skills, what can be done to solicit or improve their performance?
  - b. If the best solution is instruction, explore the following issues:
    - i. What will they do and what won't they do to learn the desired knowledge or skills?
    - ii. What teaching strategies might work best with this group of learners?
    - iii. What teaching strategies should be avoided with this group of learners?
  - c. Do we need to obtain CME credit for the activity? If so, why?

*Adapted by Teri Turner, MD, MPH, MEd, FAAP and Zoey Goore, MD, FAAP April 2015 from the original work of William A. Anderson, Ph.D., Office of Medical Education, Research and Development, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine originally developed in 1993.*

- d. Are there other groups we could collaborate with?
- 5. What are the feelings (impressions, opinions, reactions and priorities) related to the topic? Explore reactions to the topic (skills, body of knowledge, responsibility, task).
  - a. Check for reactions to training related to the topic (past, present, potential)
  - b. How big a priority is this to all of your sources?
    - i. Check perceptions of its priority in relation to other topics
    - ii. Check perceptions of priority of sub-topics
  - c. Determine confidence related to the topic.
    - i. Do trainees feel they are able to learn the subject or skill(s)?
    - ii. Do faculty feel competent to model the necessary skills and/or attitudes?
  - d. What are the incentives for doing it right (or the “new” way)
  - e. What are the incentives for doing it wrong (or the “old” way)
  - f. What barriers might we encounter?