Multi-tasking and Healthy Work-culture

Even before the pandemic, we learned how the absence of one skilled worker starts fire-fighting to manage order processing while maintaining safety, quality and productivity.

In the new normal, the risk of losing multiple employees in isolation, signals that it is more essential than ever to have multi-tasking employees working to a common standard. Multi-tasking provides rapid emergency cover for missing staff (and maintains total productive effectiveness).

Our model for multitasking categorizes staff on skill-sets AND behavioral norms.

Why Skills AND Behavioral Norms?

Many companies around the world use both skills/performance AND behavioral norms (standards), having realized early-on, that work safety, work quality and staff-retention starts with healthy work-culture. Healthy work-culture is predicated on common standards of behavior.

We begin the journey by establishing behavioral norms, ideally by involving staff at all levels to surface these in a facilitated process. Having established these, we then refer to them in contracts of employment, Personal Development Reviews, Pay and Reward schemes, career-promotions and in management notices. When a tipping-point of people start to rôle-model these behaviors (and call-out those that fall below the cultural norms), then the work-culture becomes standardized. When this is coupled with standardized work-procedures, the culture is safer, works to higher standards and is also one where people have more contentment at work; staff-retention is improved.

The multi-tasking DCMME Instrument is simple and works on five levels which are notated on the basis of four icons, or no icon at all. They look like this (in blue for skills and in green for behaviors):
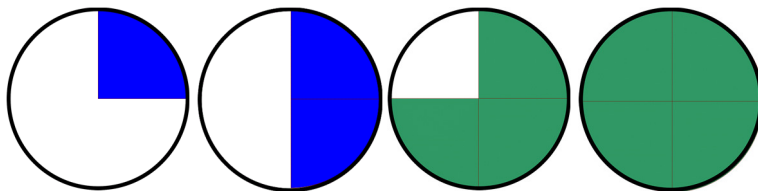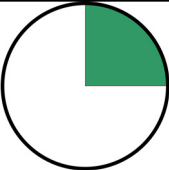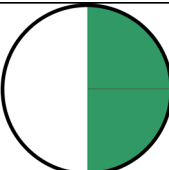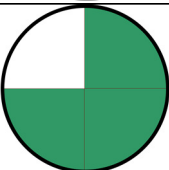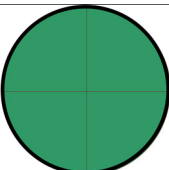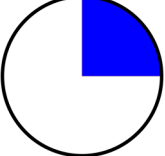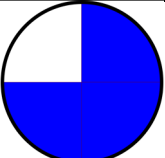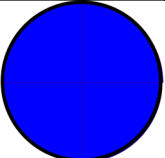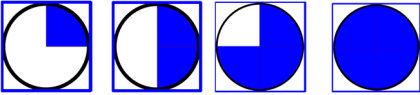

The highest level is the full circle where an individual not only exhibits all the required norms but is also certified to train and supervise other people. You may wish to consider Virtual Reality training apps to give staff A/V experiences that are very like the actual work, so they learn faster. They will know both how and why certain steps are taken and they can already imagine doing these steps themselves.

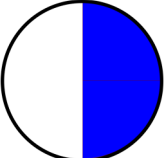The learning can be taken forward on the job itself using Augmented Reality glasses/goggles and these will also remove the operator's need to touch a screen or keyboard, as they can be activated by voice-commands; reducing infection risks.

Example Behavioral Map

- Listening when others are speaking without interruption
- Assertion: Speaking up clearly when information critical to safety, quality or manufacturing inefficiency and potential upcoming issues will compromise company standards
- Questioning Level 2: For necessary information to meet safety, quality requirements
- Questioning Level 3: In addition, questioning to meet takt requirements
- Questioning Level 4: In addition, to question others to help them reach their own determination of the correct actions and behaviors to meet both technical and behavioral norms.
- Accountability Level 2: Turning up on time clean, providing good notice if not able to attend at work
- Accountability Level 3: In addition, demonstrating pro-activity in maintaining machine and tool standards for work-area and communicating concerns appropriately that could lead to safety, quality and/or takt failures
- Accountability Level 4: In addition, demonstrated pro-activity in politely drawing attention to concerns outside the immediate work-area that do not meet safety, quality, takt, house-keeping and behavioral standards.
- Team Playing Level 2: Communicating and seeking out others for advice in a timely manner
- Team Playing Level 3: In addition, attempting to collaborate for win3 solutions and willingness to compromise where necessary; receives and acts on feedback; gives thanks to others and praises others when appropriate; flexible and willing to take and achieve on both skills and behavioral improvements
- Team Playing Level 4: In addition, provides feedback to others according to the corporate feedback standard; provides both praise and developmental feedback in a timely manner.

	Understands the (plant) behavioral norms (stage 1)
	Demonstrates a good working use of the behavioral norms (stage 2)
	Demonstrates improved working use of the behavioral norms (stage 3)
	Can demonstrate all behavioral norms seamlessly and is ready to remind others, politely, and at any level of seniority, if the behavioral standard is not being met by that other person.

	Understands the steps required to complete the prescribed task
	Performs the task safely and to quality specification but not to takt-time[1]
	Performs the task safely, to quality specification and to takt-time.
	Can supervise and mentor the task to the Task Developer Standard
	Is certified to do repairs (boxed symbol) on all equipment used during the task

---

[1] Takt-time is the rate at which a finished component/product task needs to be completed in order to meet the production criteria (and/or the customer demand).

Example Certification Notice for a Team

You can use these norms as shown here as a small example of a full profile including ALL skills and behaviors required:

Author Josh Able / Team Phoenix / Date Feb-21-2020	Complete Shift-Change Briefig	Complete safety audit and organize	Maintain machine	maintain the correct components	Listening	Assertion	Questioning	Accountability	Team Playing
Arun B	◐ (half blue)	◕ (3/4 blue)		● (full blue)	◗ (half green)	● (full green)	● (full green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◕ (3/4 green)
Debs K	◔ (1/4 blue)	◕ (3/4 blue)		◐ (half blue)	◕ (3/4 green)	◔ (1/4 green)	● (full green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◕ (3/4 green)
Lindy C			◔ (1/4 green, boxed)		● (full green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◗ (half green)
Fred J	● (full blue)	◔ (1/4 blue)		◐ (half blue)	● (full green)	◗ (half green)	◕ (3/4 green)	◕ (3/4 green)	● (full green)

Please note that Lindy is in Maintenance & Repairs, but did not ever qualify to run the machine for productive purposes. Lindy does though, still have to meet team standards for behaviors.

The chart will be available at the work-area, so the supervisor and staff can see it at any time.

Having chosen your own set of skill standards and behavioral norms and created your own charts for each task (or machine, as appropriate), place the chart where it is visible. It will aid the re-allocation of staff to meet short-fall on any task or piece of equipment. It also sets in place a developmental line to excellence for everyone on the team.

The chart will be available at the work-area, so the supervisor and staff can see it at any time.