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The Complexity and Performance Eye Chart

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Leadership Alignment

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The Complexity and Performance Eye Chart

Defining Complexity (Degree of Difficulty) in Healthcare

Everyone agrees that not all departments, leadership roles and service lines in healthcare are created equal. Quite simply, there are some functions and roles that are more difficult to manage due the complexity of the assignment and inherent challenges. Success Profiles has performed a comprehensive analysis with measured feedback from several thousand healthcare executives to better differentiate complexity (degree of difficulty) for the 100 most common healthcare functions and leadership roles.

The 7 criteria that is used to determine relative complexity is as follows:

1. The "pace" or volume in which the department tends to operate (lower/slower, medium, high/fast pace).
2. The overall size of the department and span of responsibility (fewer than 15 staff members, 15 - 25, more than 25).
3. The financial revenue contribution or dependence on income (high cost/expense, balanced cost and revenue, high revenue).
4. The advanced education or training required to work in the assignment (lower, medium, higher education).
5. The availability (or scarcity) of people available within the marketplace (abundant, average, scarce).
6. The level of emotional stress experienced in the department (lower, medium, higher stress).
7. The level of overall risk involved with quality and safety issues (lower, medium, higher risk).

The following table represents the summary findings and categorization of 35 very common healthcare departments/service lines. This table is best used to estimate the relative complexity of various functions. While it is possible for departments listed below in the "Lower" category to be "Medium" or even "Higher" Degree of Difficulty in a given organization, it is not likely. The complexity determination considers the front-line management positions only, not leaders at the VP or executive levels. All VP/executive positions are considered to be relatively "High" Degree of Difficulty (DoD) roles.

Defining Department "Degree of Difficulty"
Examples of Levels (Lower, Medium, and High DoD Departments)

| High to Highest "DoD"	Medium "DoD"	Lower "DoD"
Emergency Dept	*Transcription*	*Human Resources*
Med Surgical & OR Units	*Facilities & Maintenance**	Housekeeping*
Labor & Delivery/OB	*Food/Nutrition Service**	Education
Pharmacy	*Security**	Foundation
CCU/ICU	*Oncology*	Physical Therapy/Rehab.
Radiology	*Orthopedics*	*Admitting/Patient Reg.*
Cardiology/Cath Lab	*Behavioral Health*	*Finance/Accounting*
Pediatrics	*Medical Groups*	*Administration*
Respiratory Therapy	*IT and IS*	*Volunteers**
		Pastoral care*

Complexity and Performance Eye Chart

In December of 2010 we took collective inventory with the Performance Management Eye Chart (PMEC) quartile distribution of performance in 210 organizations and 11,115 front-line managers representing the top 100 most common departments within a healthcare system. The Eye Chart data was sorted by the frequency of distribution. Quite simply, we asked the question "How often did the individual departments perform in the bottom quartile (RED zone), the lower middle quartile (ORANGE zone), the upper middle quartile (YELLOW zone), and top quartile (GREEN zone)?"

The results from the study are formatted into a new Eye Chart that illustrates the collective distribution of performance with all 100 department types side by side. For each department type, the percentages of sampled departments with performance rating of excelling (Green), succeeding (Yellow) struggling, (Orange), and failing (Red) are shown in the bars (below).

The Complexity and Performance Eye Chart representing all 100 departments.
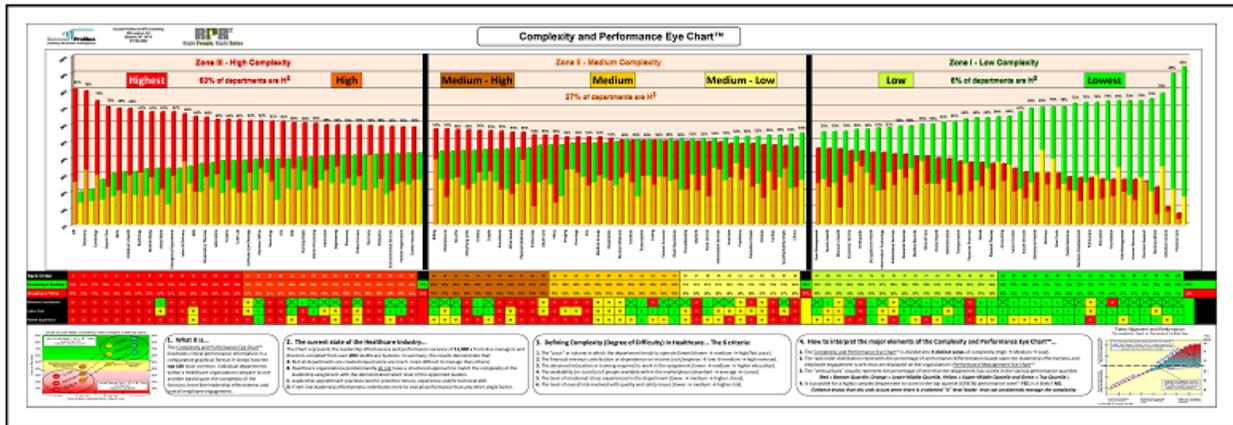
The Complexity and Performance Eye Chart is divided into three complexity zones (high, medium and low) with seven difficulty ratings (highest, high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, low and lowest) based upon the overall performance distribution of sampled departments in each of the four quartiles. Departments in the High complexity zone have a large percentage of the sample which are failing or struggling; departments in the Low complexity zone tend to generally be succeeding or excelling.
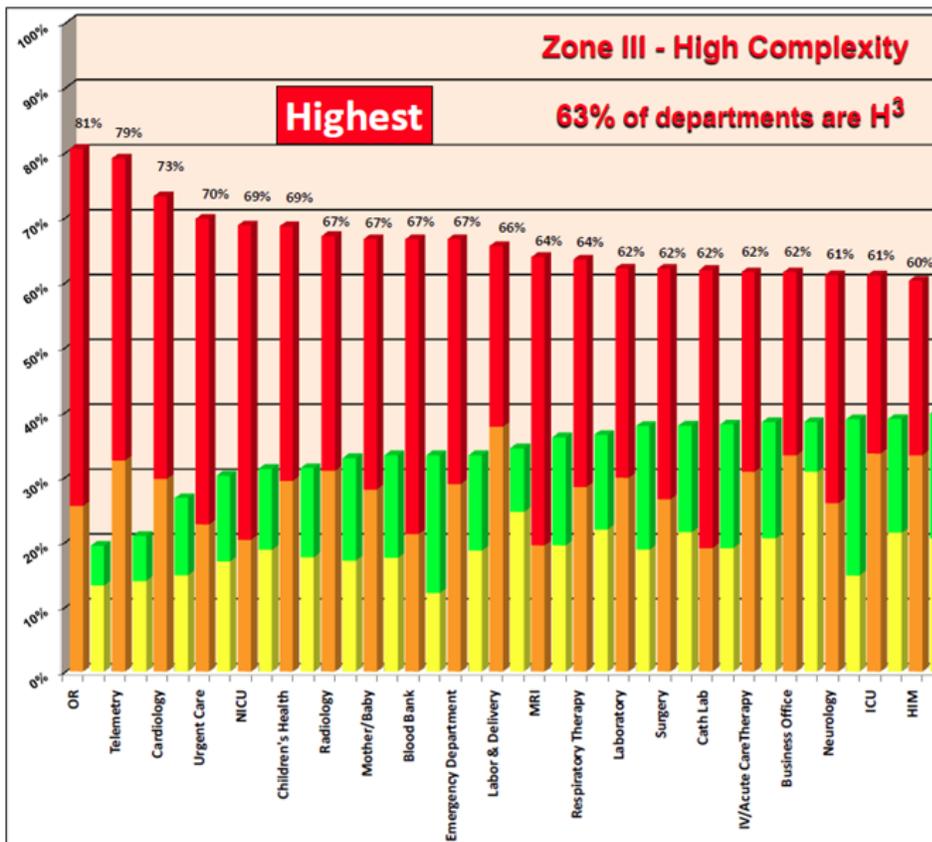
Examples of significant differences in complexity and impact on overall performance

In the High Complexity zone, OR and Cardiology have performed in the bottom half of the Eye Chart a significant portion of the time.

			Performance by Quartile			
Highest Complexity	**Red Quartile**	**Orange**	**(Bottom Half)**	**Yellow**	**Green**	**(Top Half)**
OR	**55%**	**26%**	**(81%)**	**13%**	**6%**	**(19%)**
Cardiology	**44%**	**30%**	**(74%)**	**15%**	**11%**	**(26%)**

According to the data, when the departments did perform in the top two quartiles, an A-level leader was usually managing the department.

In the Medium Complexity zone, the Transcription and Coding departments have performed in the top and bottom halves of the Performance Management Eye Chart an equal percentage of the time.

			Performance by Quartile			
Medium Complexity	**Red Quartile**	**Orange**	**(Bottom Half)**	**Yellow**	**Green**	**(Top Half)**
Transcription	**21%**	**29%**	**(50%)**	**29%**	**21%**	**(50%)**
Coding	**26%**	**24%**	**(50%)**	**29%**	**21%**	**(50%)**

In the Low Complexity zone, the Education and HR departments have performed in the top half of the Performance Management Eye Chart a significant portion of the time.

			Performance by Quartile			
Low Complexity	**Red Quartile**	**Orange**	**(Bottom Half)**	**Yellow**	**Green**	**(Top Half)**
Education	**12%**	**15%**	**(27%)**	**26%**	**47%**	**(63%)**
HR	**12%**	**15%**	**(27%)**	**28%**	**45%**	**(63%)**

The average distribution for the quartiles were as follows:

Performance by Quartile

Complexity	Red Quartile	Orange Quartile		Yellow Quartile	Green Quartile	
Avg. Bottom	37%	28%	(65%)	20%	15%	(35%)
Avg. Low Mid	29%	27%	(56%)	24%	20%	(44%)
Avg. Upper Mid	23%	24%	(47%)	28%	25%	(53%)
Avg. Top	12%	19%	(31%)	28%	41%	(69%)

Note the opposite swing in performance between the average bottom quartiles (Red and Orange) and the average top quartiles (Yellow and Green), and the consistency within the two middle quartiles.

What we can conclude: If the selection criteria for all positions in all departments is essentially the same (and it is), the only explanation for the differences in performance lies with the complexity of the assignment (DoD).

The research also builds a very strong business case that an organization's appointment practices should appropriately match the talent and demonstrated ability of the leaders with the complexity of the assignment. If this occurs consistently, the organization is more likely to get good results (by virtually every measure). If this doesn't occur, the evidence shows that a sub-optimized performance will most likely result.

For more information, please contact us at: *Right People Right Roles* 877-582-8884,
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