Exercise 1.4: Identifying Root Causes, Symptoms, and Irrelevant Statements

Objective:

To test understanding of Root Cause Analysis (RCA) by categorizing statements into root causes, effects/symptoms, and irrelevant statements and linking root causes to their respective effects/symptoms.

Exercise Layout:

Scenario Introduction:

Introduce the participants to the exercise. Explain that they will receive a list of 30 statements related to business operations. The objective is to categorize these statements and link root causes to their effects/symptoms.

Step 1 - Categorization:

Participants will work in pairs. Each pair will review the same list of 30 statements and categorize them into three categories:

1. **Irrelevant Statements**
2. **Effects/Symptoms**
3. **Root Causes**

Step 2 - Linking Root Causes to Effects/Symptoms:

After categorizing the statements, each pair will link the identified root causes to their respective effects/symptoms.

Strategy Presentation and Feedback:

Each pair will present their categorized statements and linkages to another pair for feedback and discussion. This will help reinforce their understanding and provide insights into different perspectives.

Participant Exercise Handout

Instructions:

By engaging in this exercise, teams will enhance their understanding of RCA by categorizing statements and linking root causes to their effects, reinforcing the practical application of root cause analysis concepts.

1. **Work with your partner to categorize each statement into one of the following:**
    a. **Irrelevant Statements**
    b. **Effects/Symptoms**
    c. **Root Causes**

2. **Link each root cause to its corresponding effect/symptom.**

List of Statements:

1. Employees and customers frequently complain about outdated software.
2. Sales have been steadily increasing over the past year.
3. The company has a high turnover rate.
4. The marketing budget has been cut by 20%.
5. Customer feedback indicates dissatisfaction with product quality.
6. There is a lack of training programs for new employees.
7. Inventory levels are consistently too high.
8. The break room has been recently renovated.
9. There is a delay in production due to equipment failures.
10. The office is located in a high-traffic area.
11. Customer service response times are longer than average.
12. The CEO attends industry conferences regularly.
13. Employee morale is low.
14. There is a strong partnership with a major supplier.
15. Quality control checks are often skipped to save time.
16. The company has a solid social media presence.
17. Marketing campaigns fail to reach the target audience.
18. The company has received several industry awards.
19. Communication between departments is poor.
20. The company recently implemented a new ERP system.
21. Sales targets are consistently missed.
22. Office supplies are ordered monthly.
23. The website is outdated and difficult to navigate.
24. The company has an efficient logistics system.
25. Employees report high levels of stress.
26. There is a lack of clear project management processes.
27. The company's brand reputation is declining.
28. Regular team-building activities are organized.
29. The company cafeteria serves a variety of healthy options.
30. The annual financial audit was completed last month.