

Action Hierarchy Worksheet

Discuss how you can apply the concept(s) below to the process you want to improve. Generate a list of ideas, focusing on the feasible actions that are the strongest. See the [RCA2 Report](#) for an example of each action category.

Actions	Ideas
Stronger Actions These tasks require less reliance on humans to remember to perform the task correctly.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural/physical plant changes • New devices with usability testing • Engineering control (forcing function) • Simplify process • Standardize on equipment or process • Tangible involvement by leadership 	
Intermediate Actions These tasks are less effective than the strongest level actions but more effective than the weakest level.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy • Increase in staffing/decrease in workload • Software enhancements, modifications • Eliminate/reduce distractions • Education using simulation-based training, with periodic refresher sessions and observations • Checklist/cognitive aids • Eliminate look- and sound-alikes • Standardized communication tools • Enhanced documentation, communication 	
Weaker Actions These tasks require more reliance on humans to remember to perform the task correctly.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double checks • Warnings • New procedure/memorandum/policy • Trainings 	

Action Hierarchy levels and categories are based on Root Cause Analysis Tools, VA National Center for Patient Safety, http://www.patientsafety.va.gov/docs/joe/rca_tools_2_15.pdf