The Differential Effects of Three Job-Related Manipulations on the Task Performance of Movie Theatre Employees

Raymond Douglas Bennett

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THE DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF THREE JOB-RELATED MANIPULATIONS
ON THE TASK PERFORMANCE OF MOVIE THEATRE EMPLOYEES

by

Raymond Douglas Bennett

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
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Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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THE DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF THREE JOB-RELATED MANIPULATIONS ON THE TASK PERFORMANCE OF MOVIE THEATRE EMPLOYEES

Raymond Douglas Bennett, M. A.
Western Michigan University, 1982

This study examined task checklist use (self-recording with accuracy monitoring and performance standards with performance monitoring) in a program designed to increase task performance of movie theatre employees. A multiple baseline design across tasks was employed. Accuracy of self-recording averaged 68% when the checklists were first introduced alone and increased to an average of 93% when feedback for task performance and recording accuracy was implemented. Employee task performance averaged 48% for Baseline and 92% for the final condition. The introduction of task checklists alone was followed by a mean performance increase of 18%. The introduction of self-recording and supervisory comments for accuracy was followed by an additional mean performance increase of 18% while the combination of performance standard and supervisory comments was followed by an additional 8% increase. This project utilized an effective, low-cost program to engineer improved levels of task performance in the work setting over a two-month period. The results were interpreted in terms of the instructional effects versus feedback effects of checklist use and in terms of variables influencing improvements in accuracy of self-recording and variables influencing improvements in performance.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to United Artists Communications, Inc., and, in particular, Elaine Hausser and Barry Steeby for their support and assistance in the implementation of this project. I especially thank Doctors Dale Brethower, Norman Peterson, and James Cowart for their critical evaluations and suggestions which helped to formulate this research project. Finally, I thank Steven Stang for his expertise in critical proofreading which helped to make this manuscript more clear.

Raymond Douglas Bennett
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Highly productive employees are an asset to every organization. Behavioral interventions designed to engineer high levels of performance might include performance feedback, incentive systems, contingency management, and training programs. The present study examined a low-cost set of factors including employee self-recording, supervisory feedback, and imposed performance standards that were designed to improve employee task performance at a movie theatre.

Performance feedback was shown to yield successful results in numerous social contexts. Kreitner, Reif, and Morris (1977) illustrated that performance feedback delivered by a supervisor increased job performance of mental health technicians. Performance feedback was also combined with praise to decrease costly truck turnaround time in a recent study by Runnion, Johnson, and McWhorter (1978). Cossairt, Hall, and Hopkins (1973) reported that feedback plus praise increased target behaviors of teacher praising and pupil attending. Nemeroff and Cosentino (1979) demonstrated that feedback interventions became more effective at increasing performance appraisal skills of managers when combined with imposed performance standards.

Some tasks, by their design, provide feedback to the performer. An archer, for instance, can immediately see how far off-target (and in which direction) the last shot was and then can make adjustments so that the next shot might be closer. This is one kind of performance
feedback. Simply stated, feedback is information related to some output. Performance feedback means providing personal performance information, related to some specific task performance, to one or a group of people.

Performance feedback can occur in several forms. Vocally delivered performance feedback was shown by Panyan, Boozen, and Morris (1970) to act as a positive reinforcer to staff for applying behavior management techniques. In the work setting, performance feedback can be delivered by a supervisor in writing or vocally, or mechanically during a task situation by a performance counter (e.g., the Production Achievement Monitor described by Currie [1979]). Bricker, Morgan, and Grabowski (1972) used a videotaped record of performance as one feedback delivery method to develop and maintain behavior management skills of cottage attendants. In another form, performance feedback can be generated by an employee utilizing a self-recording system. That is, the employee can learn of personal performance through self-obtained records. This form of feedback was demonstrated by Komaki, Blood, and Holder (1980) to increase employee social behavior. Supervisory vocal feedback and self-recorded feedback were examined in the present study.

Performance feedback might easily acquire conditioned reinforcing properties when paired with social praise. This reinforcement effect was illustrated in a recent study by Runnion et al. (1978) whereby performance feedback, specific to high levels of performance, functioned to increase and maintain high levels of performance. Finally, performance feedback can serve to strengthen rule control; for instance, when an individual has covertly rehearsed rules communicated during
previous feedback interactions, thereby changing subsequent performance
guided by the rule.

Self-recording systems have several advantages and disadvantages. Some of these advantages include practicality, high accuracy (Azrin & Powell, 1969), and effects of increasing related behavior (Broden, Hall, & Mitts, 1972). Two disadvantages of self-recording, both of which conflict with aforementioned advantages, include inaccuracy (Fixen, Phillips, & Wolf, 1972) and subject reactivity (Johnson & White, 1971).

The present study utilized a self-recording system for two reasons. First, such a system has been shown to increase task performances (Johnson & White, 1971). Specifically, Johnson and White (1971) illustrated that self-recording alone resulted in grade point gains for those pupils who self-recorded. In the setting utilized in the present study, management desired an increase in task performance. Second, such a system was less costly than direct observational techniques, since employees collected their own performance data.

Much research has been done on the effects of self-recording. Bauman and Iwata (1977) found that a combination of work scheduling and self-recording increased and maintained independent housekeeping skills of two subjects. McKenzie and Rushall (1974) illustrated that a self-recording program improved attendance and performance in a competitive swimming training environment.

Correspondence training is an area of research considered closely related to self-recording. Research findings in this area have, thus far, illustrated that functional correspondence, if not initially
apparent, is trainable. Correspondence training involves either requiring the individual to report what behavior would be emitted or report on what had already been emitted. Israel (1973) identified two kinds of correspondence: positive correspondence and negative correspondence. Positive correspondence occurred when the individual said some behavior would be done (or was done) and, correspondingly, would do (or did) it. Negative correspondence occurred when no prior verbal statement related to the target behavior was made and no subsequent target behavior was exhibited by the individual. Previous research in the correspondence training area has focused on preschoolers, retardates, and children as subjects (Israel, 1973; Israel and O'Leary, 1973; Risley & Hart, 1968). Correspondence training has not been evaluated with employees in an organizational context similar to the one in the present study. As is the case with correspondence training, the present study investigated the accuracy of self-recording. Specifically, Israel (1973) found that without any correspondence training, discrepancies existed between individual subject reports of accomplishments and actual accomplishments.

Even though each of the factors evaluated in the present study has been shown to individually increase human performance, the factors have not been sequentially evaluated against several job-related tasks and have not been investigated with normal adults in a work setting. Therefore, the present study represented an analysis of that specific sequential procedure as one low-cost, high-yield performance improvement project. Furthermore, self-recording systems that yield accurate data are essential for organizations when such systems become
coordinated with operations like employee retention, promotion, and performance-contingent pay scales. The organizational manipulations programmed for the present study have been developed to answer the following research questions:

1. How accurate is employee self-recording with and without contingencies for accuracy?

2. Does self-recording alone improve employee task performance?

3. What effect do contingencies for accurate self-recording have on specific employee task performance?

4. What effect do accuracy contingencies for self-recording and imposed performance standards have on specific employee task performance?

5. What performance effects will a specific job checklist facilitate when applied without performance standards?
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects and Settings

Subjects in the project were part-time employees of a five-house movie theatre complex. Experimental data were compiled on a total of seven subjects (six female, one male). The subjects' ages ranged from 16 to 22 years. Six employees participated in each condition of the project. One subject terminated employment during Baseline and was soon replaced by another employee during Condition 1. Each subject, with the exception of one, had a high school diploma; and several had two to four years of college.

The manager and the assistant were the only supervisory personnel responsible for implementing the conditions of the study. Both managers received identical sets of written instructions. These instructions included the proposed conditions of the project and other implementation concerns.

Dependent Variables

Percent of tasks completed, as measured by inspections performed by the investigator, was the basic dependent measure examined in the present study. Self-recorded measures of task completion were compared to the data from management inspections to obtain measures of recording discrepancies.
Independent Variables

Task Checklists A and B (see Appendices A and B) were introduced during Condition 1. Self-recording occurred when the employees began collecting their own task performance data on these checklists. Accuracy feedback was added later in the study. The manager implemented a 95% task performance standard for all concession employees during the final phase of the study. This meant that a combination of any 35 tasks (including tasks from both checklists) should have been completed each night. Performance feedback toward this standard occurred through a brief meeting between the manager and the employee. With the exception of Employee 1, who received this feedback twice, all employees received performance feedback once.

Experimental Conditions

A baseline period was followed by the introduction of a checklist describing a partial list of management-identified tasks. A later checklist described the remainder of the tasks. Then, accuracy contingencies were instated, followed by management-imposed performance standards and performance feedback. These conditions are described in more detail below.

Baseline

During Baseline, the employees performed their jobs as usual. They were unaware that specific performance data were being collected. These data were collected and stored in a locked file that was only
accessible to management. During Baseline, management was instructed not to discuss any of the study activities with the employees. Baseline data were collected each night for seven days on Checklist A tasks (see Appendix A) and 14 days on Checklist B tasks (see Appendix B).

Checklist Introduction

During this condition, the employees received two different memos from management. The first (see Appendix C) requested each employee to use Checklist A. The second (see Appendix D) requested each employee to use Checklist A and B. Two task checklists were used to evaluate change sequentially across two sets of employee behavior. Task Checklist A contained 18 tasks, and Checklist B contained 20. The tasks on each checklist ranged from low effort items (e.g., switching off the storeroom fan) to those items considered medium effort (e.g., filling the butter server) to those items considered high effort (e.g., cleaning the popcorn bins). The exact degree of effort was never identified. However, even though some tasks could have been considered occasionally more effortful or less pleasant than others, management indicated that each checklist was quite similar in the amount of time necessary to complete. Each employee was told that the checklists should not result in more work, since most of the tasks should have been completed each night anyway. Each task had its own completion criterion listed next to it on the checklist. For example, the task "candy counter restocked" had a specific completion criterion of all available candy rows restocked to identified limit.

Throughout the entire study, two employees closed approximately
three times per week. At other times, one employee closed. When two employees closed, specific task delegations and task recording was to be determined jointly by both employees. The employees often decided to work and record from one checklist apiece. Task delegation was most clear when one employee closed, since s/he was solely responsible for every closing task.

Periodic Spot-checks and Accuracy Feedback

The employees were told through a memo (see Appendix E) that spot-checks would soon be occurring on Checklist A and that each employee would learn how accurately s/he self-recorded on a given night. This form of accuracy feedback was delivered via a brief (three- to five-minute) meeting with the manager or the assistant manager. Each employee received a form of this information once during this condition. Two meeting agenda formats were available for this meeting. One was labeled "No Praise" (see Appendix F). This format included employee self-recorded and management recorded observations for the same night. An itemization space was provided where the supervisor was required to list all the tasks that were not agreed upon by both parties as being or not being finished to the established completion criteria. The "No Praise" format was used if the employee record differed by 10% or more of the management record for the same night. The other meeting format, "Praise," (see Appendix G) included a similar percentage breakdown as with the "No Praise" format but did not contain an itemized listing of the disagreed upon tasks. Several descriptive praise statements were included in this format. A "Praise" format was
used if the employee record differed 10% or less from the management record for the same night. During this condition, then, feedback was only provided for accurate self-recording. These same activities that were programmed for Checklist A were extended to Checklist B through a memo issued several days later (see Appendix H). All feedback meetings throughout the present study were privately held between the supervisor and employee. Management indicated that all relevant information specified on a particular meeting format (see Appendices F, G, J, and K) was covered at each feedback meeting. However, the supervisor attempted to provide the feedback in common terminology (e.g., "Please try to be more accurate when you monitor your own performance," became, "Please try to be more accurate when you initial the jobs," during the feedback meetings).

Management-imposed Performance Standard and Performance Feedback

The final memo indicated to the employees that a 95% performance standard must be met (see Appendix I). This meant that regardless of the number of employees closing the stand, at least 35 of 38 tasks must be finished. This condition differed from the previous ones in that it included vocal feedback specific to task performance toward the 95% performance standard.

Depending upon the behavior exhibited by an employee, each might receive any one or more of the following types of performance feedback during Condition 3: (a) praise for finishing 95% or more of tasks (manager used Appendix J); (b) praise for recording accurately (within 10% of management record) (manager used Appendix I); (c) no praise
and an itemized breakdown of uncompleted tasks (when task performance was below 95%) (manager used Appendix K); (d) no praise (task performance below 95%) and an itemized breakdown of inaccurately reported and uncompleted tasks (manager used Appendices K and F). All employees placed personally completed checklists in personal files kept in a drawer at the work station.

Table 1 illustrates the placement of the important activities contained in the present study.

Definitions

The definitions are as follows:

1. Completed task. Any identified task on Checklist A or B that was undertaken and finished according to the established completion criterion.

2. Management record of employee performance. The percentage of tasks completed by the employee as compiled by either the primary or secondary observer.

3. Employee self-record of performance. The percentage of completed tasks by the employee as derived from the completed checklists located in the employee personal files.

4. Self-recording discrepancy. The percentage defined as the difference between a management record of task performance and the corresponding employee self-record of performance for a specific work day.

Observation and Reliability

Performance data of all concession closing employees were collected by the investigator. These performance data comprised the
<table>
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<th>Condition 2</th>
<th>Condition 3</th>
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<td>Employee self-recorded using Checklist A</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee self-recorded using Checklist B</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee task performance recorded by management</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-recording accuracy feedback delivered to employee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance standard implemented</td>
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<td>Performance standard feedback delivered to employee</td>
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management records. The observational procedure employed to obtain management records consisted of the observer using a blank checklist to evaluate the completeness of the tasks as attempted by the employee. The completeness of each task was evaluated according to the established completion criterion for each. These observations were made after the concession employees had left for the evening. Each nightly observation by either the investigator or assistant manager took approximately 15 minutes.

Every closing employee received a memo describing the activities of the current condition and was instructed to initial each task s/he personally completed to the established criterion. The employee self-recorded percentages were derived from these data sheets.

Interobserver agreement checks were made on 15% of the total number of work days. Two checks were made for Baseline and Conditions 1 and 2. One check was made during Condition 3. These interobserver agreement checks were accomplished by first requiring the assistant manager to evaluate the tasks at the concession stand and then, once completed, requiring the investigator to evaluate the same tasks. An agreement was scored if both the primary (the investigator) and the secondary (the assistant manager) observers agreed that a task was or was not finished to the established completion criterion. The investigator remained the primary observer throughout the entire experiment. Reliability percentages were calculated by dividing the number of agreements on all identified tasks by the number of agreements plus disagreements and then multiplying by 100. Both observers made these evaluations without first seeing the employee's self-record and
without first seeing the other observer's completed sheet. For Checklist A, interobserver agreement checks ranged from 89% to 100%, with a mean of 94%. For Checklist B, interobserver agreement checks ranged from 86% to 100%, with a mean of 90%. For both checklists, the overall mean interobserver agreement level was 92%. In all cases, the primary observer's data were used as the dependent measure.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Figure 1 illustrates percentage of tasks completed for all conditions. The sequential effects of each independent variable were examined on a condition-by-condition basis. Recording discrepancies (defined as the difference between a management record percentage and an employee self-record percentage for a given work date) served as the evaluative measure of self-recording accuracy. Management records throughout each condition served as the evaluative measure for assessing all employee task performance changes.

During Condition 1, the mean employee recording discrepancy across both checklists was 32%. Mean recording discrepancies (across both checklists) occurring during Condition 1 ranged from a low of 24% to a high of 41% per employee. This range was the largest observed recording discrepancy to occur during this project. However, even though the employees were least accurate during Condition 1, their task performance improved 9% on Checklist A and 25% on Checklist B as compared to their respective mean Baseline percentages.

During Condition 2, when recording accuracy feedback periodically followed employee self-recording, the mean employee recording discrepancy across both Checklists was 13%. Mean recording discrepancies (across both checklists) during Condition 2 ranged from 9% to 15% per employee. Employee performance improved 14% over the previous condition mean task performance for Checklist A and 23% for Checklist B.
Figure 1. Employee Record and Management Record of Percent of Tasks Completed per Work Date across Checklists A and B. Horizontal Dotted Lines within Each Condition Indicate Computed Means.
During Condition 3, when the 95% performance standard and performance feedback were implemented, the mean employee recording discrepancy was 7%. Mean recording discrepancies (across both checklists) occurring during Condition 3 ranged from 2% to 1% per employee. Table 2 lists individual recording discrepancies for each subject across self-recording conditions. Employee performance improved 7% over the previous condition (Condition 2) on Checklist A tasks and 9% on Checklist B tasks.

For the entire study, the overall mean recording discrepancy between employee and management was 19%.

For Checklist A tasks, employee performance had a range of 14%, with a mean of 63%, during Baseline; a range of 22%, with a mean of 72%, during Condition 1; a range of 17%, with a mean of 86%, during Condition 2; and a range of 17%, with a mean of 93%, during Condition 3.

For Checklist B tasks, employee performance had a range of 16%, with a mean of 34%, during Baseline; a range of 30%, with a mean of 59%, during Condition 1; a range of 25%, with a mean of 82%, during Condition 2; and a range of 15%, with a mean of 91%, during Condition 3.

There were no appreciable differences in task performance or recording accuracy when two employees closed as compared to when one employee closed the concession stand.

The results of the present study determined that self-recording was more accurate with applied contingencies for accuracy than without them. Employee task performance increased with the presentation of the checklists. Performance was also shown to increase when the contingencies for self-recording accuracy were introduced and increased.
Table 2

Individual Employee Recording Discrepancies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYEE</th>
<th>CHECKLIST INFORMATION</th>
<th>SELF-RECORDING AND ACCURACY FEEDBACK</th>
<th>SELF-RECORDING/ACCURACY FEEDBACK PLUS PERFORMANCE STANDARD AND PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
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even more when performance standards were added. The net performance
gain, derived by subtracting the Baseline performance mean from the last
condition performance mean, for the entire project was 44%.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

The results demonstrated the effects of several low-cost manipulations. Self-recording by concession employees was found to be most accurate when accuracy contingencies were applied and less accurate when no accuracy contingencies were applied. The implementation of task checklists alone was accompanied by a significant increase in task performance for both sets of tasks. Employee performance increased dramatically over previous levels when self-recording feedback was implemented and increased more when performance standards and performance feedback were introduced.

Task performance and recording accuracy levels were similar whether one or two employees closed the concession stand. A reason for the occurrence of this finding is that when a single employee was scheduled, patron attendance was low. This provided the employee with numerous opportunities in which to begin tasks before actual closing time. Since two employees were scheduled on nights when patron attendance was greatest, tasks could only be initiated by the employees when the concession stand closed. Identical clean-up time was allocated each night regardless of the number of employees responsible for closing. Based on this analysis, a single concession closing employee had more time to complete tasks; however, each had more tasks (per employee) to complete. When two employees closed, fewer tasks (per employee) were attempted. However, each employee had less time to
complete each task. This scheduling situation within concession employees seemed to balance across the duration of the current study.

Self-recording accuracy noticeably improved as the current project progressed. This improvement was most likely a function of several factors to be discussed in detail below.

Task performance also noticeably improved as the current study progressed. The improvement appears to be partly an instructional effect, as the employees learned how to correctly perform their job. A large task performance increase was shown when the checklists were introduced. Further instructional effects, occurring as a result of self-recording system use, were a likely facilitator of task performance increases when paired with task performance standards. These effects might have also been facilitated through implied (do the tasks or you will lose your good standing with the manager) or the actual (praise and mild criticism) management contingencies which occurred later in the study. Further facilitation might have occurred through peer influences involving performance prompts between closing employees (e.g., "C'mon, Tom, we can only miss three tasks and still get 95% so wipe those streaks on the display glass"). These prompts would have increased the likelihood of task completion once imposed task performance standards were established.

Large self-recording discrepancies were observed when the checklists were first introduced. These results are consistent with the Fixsen et al. (1972) study in which self-recorded data were determined to be inaccurate. There are three possible explanations for the occurrence of self-recording discrepancies in the present study. One, the
employees may have had a deficient learning history for applying task completion criterion to their own performance. For example, they might not have understood the standards or they might have believed that the standards were unrealistic and that management would not critically interpret them. Two, there were no contingencies for accurate self-recording (during Condition 1) so the employees could rate their performance any way they chose and encounter no related consequences. Three, it may have been less effortful for the employees to simply "check off" each task rather than critically evaluate each one. Greater recording accuracy might have been more quickly achieved in the present setting had the likelihood of occurrence of any of these possible reasons for recording discrepancy been reduced.

Despite the occurrence of recording discrepancies in the present study, it should be noted that the assistant manager was able to achieve a high interobserver reliability percentage the first night of Baseline without any more training for the detection of completed tasks than was given to the concession stand employees. This observation seems to reduce the possibility that not understanding the completion criteria was a likely reason for the occurrence of the large recording discrepancies observed during the first condition. However, it was also possible that employees did not believe management was serious about the standards.

The results indicated a noticeable improvement in task performance across both checklists during the Checklist Introduction condition (Condition 1). This performance improvement was a probable function of three things. One, the employees learned what tasks were specifically
required of them. Two, the employees learned, via the identified completion criteria, how well to perform each task. During Baseline, some tasks were almost never attempted (e.g., cash register chrome polished and soda machine grates washed). Other tasks were attempted by the employees, but the employees were simply not meeting the specified completion criteria (e.g., cleaning the popcorn bin, cleaning the display glass, and sweeping the floor). Furthermore, the introduction of task checklists and self-recording may have indicated to the employees that their previous task performance deviated from levels desired by management, even though they were told that the checklists were developed so that their job might be made easier. Although the increase in Checklist A task performance from Baseline to the first condition was not nearly as large as for Checklist B during the same period, one should note that the mean Baseline percentage for Checklist A was nearly twice as high. This difference in Baseline performance occurred even though management indicated both checklists required similar effort to complete. So, task checklist introduction, along with self-recording, prompted instructional control of task performance improvement over Baseline levels.

Self-recorded performance measures remained high when supervisory monitoring was added during Condition 2. Employees could achieve greater accuracy in one of two ways: (a) report low levels of task performance and not complete the tasks; or, as the employees did, (b) report high levels of task performance and increase task performance. Since there were no formalized contingencies for actual task performance during Condition 2, it seemed likely that the least
effortful way to increase accuracy (the first way stated above) would have prevailed. However, this did not occur. The employees could have been responding to implied contingencies (e.g., they were aware that management could examine performance since accuracy monitoring had already been instituted) instead of the formal contingencies (accuracy monitoring and feedback) for recording accuracy. Both the manager and assistant indicated performance feedback was not provided during the accuracy feedback condition. No reliability measure of this was obtained since the feedback meetings were privately held. Because of the privacy of these meetings, there was little opportunity to assess peer reinforcement effects for high or low task performance and was, therefore, not specifically investigated in the present study.

When self-recording monitoring was added during Condition 2, task performance gains resulted even though the programmed contingencies were designed to facilitate recording accuracy. There appear to be several reasons for these results. One, task performance increases may have been practice-effect generated. That is, as the employees used the checklists more frequently, they became more skilled in successfully applying them to their own task performance. Two, once the employees became more skilled at applying the checklists, they might have generated several forms of self-reinforcement contingent upon high levels of personal task performance. Three, the performance gains observed during this condition could have partly been caused by peer shaping effects, even though feedback sessions were private. For example, the employees could easily have communicated rules and results of personal feedback sessions to each other, including personally-held
opinions which may have indicated that management might be examining task performance in addition to recording accuracy. Broden et al. (1971) achieved similar results such that the academic behavior (a performance measure) of two pupils was increased through the use of self-recording. Since supervisory feedback occurred so infrequently during the present study (once per employee per condition), and since it was targeted toward self-recording accuracy, it is unlikely that it noticeably affected task performance.

During the last condition, a 95% across task completion standard was introduced while self-recording monitoring (with feedback) was retained from the previous condition. Self-recorded performance measures remained at a high level during this condition. However, once during this condition, a self-recorded performance measure was lower than the actual performance measure management recorded the same night. This was the only time during the present study that such a data cross-over occurred.

Self-recording discrepancies were further reduced during the last condition. The progressive effect of the experimental manipulations illustrated here that task performances continued to improve so that they more closely corresponded to the self-recorded measures. Israel and O'Leary (1973) achieved similar results by showing that correspondence could be trained in a sample of school children. High self-recorded measures of task completion may have been maintained during Condition 3 by continued management attention. Management attention was communicated and made more credible by the dissemination of a memo (Appendix I) and by the actual occurrence of supervisory monitoring.
These two events may have indicated to the employees that self-recording was not a transient concern, but rather, a concern that proved to be longer term and, therefore, quite important.

Task performance approached the 95% standard for both sets of tasks during the last condition. The performance standard was met 5 of 13 times for Checklist A tasks and 4 of 13 times for Checklist B tasks. These performance gains were made after individual completion criteria were implemented for each task during the previous two conditions.

Much like the present study, Nemeroff and Cosentino (1979) found that feedback interventions were most effective when combined with imposed performance standards. Since the employees were told that performance monitoring was scheduled (and later occurred), the 95% performance standard may have improved task performance by being associated with other implied and formal contingencies which already occurred (an example of generalized rule or contingency control). However, the results of Condition 3 indicate that standard setting (the 95% standard), including performance praise and criticism, was insufficient to facilitate consistent standard attainment in this setting (at least throughout the duration of the present study). It may have been more desirable to extend Condition 3 in order to further assess employee progress toward the 95% performance standard.

In summary, during Condition 1, the employees recorded high percentages of completed tasks; and task performance was shown to slightly improve. At this point in the study, recording discrepancies were at their highest levels. Condition 2 illustrated a continuance of high employee records of completed tasks but also showed that actual task
performance considerably increased so that there was greater correspondence between measures. Then, during Condition 3, actual task performance increased more so that it even more closely corresponded with self-recorded measures.

Each of the manipulations discussed thus far could be sufficient to individually facilitate accurate self-recording and task performance gains, although each appeared to have gained additional strength in the current setting by being collectively applied.

The cost of the present organizational intervention was low. Without the assistance of the investigator, one management person could have easily implemented each condition of this project. The costs included 25 minutes of management time per day. This time was used to make concession observations (management records), compute performance data, and provide feedback to the employee. The employees worked the same number of hours as in Baseline. Approximately $8 of paper materials were used for the entire project. Based on this breakdown, the approximate weekly cost of the present study appeared to be about $23. The total cost could be reduced further, perhaps, by monitoring less frequently and reducing the frequency of feedback sessions as performance stabilized at higher levels. Thus, the longer this study was run, the less expensive it might become.

The manipulations presented during this study might easily be applied to other jobs that produce permanent products of behavior and might also be applied to other work settings. Future research efforts that would identify cost-effective ways to stimulate high levels of accurate self-recording might provide today's managers several options.
from which to choose that would all yield accurate data for organizational decision-making. Other research efforts centered on specific analyses of participatory standard setting, peer reinforcement, and self-reinforcement for task performance could provide additional insight into the area of job analysis and employee productivity.

Furthermore, increased knowledge about the effects of self-recording might be acquired through future research methods that first established high recording accuracy and task performance levels, then evaluated maintenance characteristics of such methods requiring subjects to use some form of checklist following low performances.
### APPENDIX A: TASK CHECKLIST A

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS (INITIALS)</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHMENT</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Popcorn Bins</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Display glass cleaned</td>
<td>Outside and inside glass cleaned, with no finger or other marks visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Bin emptied/cleaned</td>
<td>All popcorn bagged; all loose kernels and other debris removed (watch corners); chrome polished (use Clorox and water).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Bin lights and blower turned off</td>
<td>Each switch to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soda Machine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Machine turned off</td>
<td>Machine switched to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Machine cleaned (exterior)</td>
<td>All finger marks and other smudges removed; no stickiness detectable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candy Counter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Display glass cleaned</td>
<td>No finger marks, cleaning residue, or other smudges visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Candy restocked</td>
<td>All available items restocked to limit; proper count obtained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Counter locked</td>
<td>Keys used and locked so that counter cannot be opened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counter Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Specialty items counted/removed</td>
<td>Proper count obtained; items placed in manager's office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Stock cabinets locked</td>
<td>Locked so that cabinets cannot be opened without a key.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Popcorn Machine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Machine cleaned</td>
<td>All chrome polished so that no grease, kernels, or finger marks are visible; screw tightened; interior free of kernels/grease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Bin cleaned</td>
<td>All popcorn removed (including corners); no smudges or other forms of debris visible on chrome bottom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TASK CHECKLIST A (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS (INITIALS)</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHMENT</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inventory</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Popcorn and soda cups stored</td>
<td>All stacks placed in appropriate cabinets below counter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inventory sheet completed</td>
<td>All required boxes on inventory sheet completed except sales category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cups counted</td>
<td>Accurate count achieved and entered in appropriate place on inventory sheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Floor swept</td>
<td>All loose debris swept off floor (including corners); floor day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash register chrome cleaned</td>
<td>Absence of finger prints and other smudges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concession stand lights turned off</td>
<td>Appropriate circuit breaker switch flipped to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX B: TASK CHECKLIST B

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS (INITIALS)</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHMENT</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Popcorn Bins</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Kernel drawer cleaned</td>
<td>No popcorn or other material remaining; chrome face polished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Bin doors polished (hinges cleaned also)</td>
<td>No finger marks or smudges visible on door; all debris removed from hinges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Butter Mats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Filled</td>
<td>Filled to within 1 1/2&quot; of top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Heater control turned off</td>
<td>Switch turned to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Exterior polished</td>
<td>Casing and tip free of butter liquid, finger marks, and all smudges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soda Machine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Overflow tray cleaned and dried</td>
<td>No visible debris; completely dry to touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Grate washed/dried</td>
<td>Absence of stickiness and dry to touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Plastic nozzles cleaned</td>
<td>Absence of stickiness and visible grime (leave nozzles in bowl and store overnight).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candy Counter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Lights turned off</td>
<td>Light switch turned to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counter Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Stock cabinet fronts cleaned</td>
<td>All debris (including moisture and other forms of dirt) removed from cabinet fronts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Front and rear counter tops cleaned</td>
<td>All debris (including moisture) removed from counter surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Popcorn Machine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Shelf and plexiglas cleaned</td>
<td>All debris and smudges removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS (INITIALS)</td>
<td>ACCOMPLISHMENT</td>
<td>STANDARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Bins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Filled</td>
<td>Filled to within 1&quot; of top. Ice must be level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Chrome cover cleaned</td>
<td>No finger or other smudges visible; dry to touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemonade Machine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Machine turned off</td>
<td>Switches in &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Machine exterior cleaned</td>
<td>All finger marks and other smudges removed; no visible dirt, moisture, or stickiness detectable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Overflow tray cleaned</td>
<td>All excess emptied; tray washed and dried so that no stickiness or moisture remains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Supply room fan turned off</td>
<td>Switch turned to &quot;off&quot; position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Night light affixed</td>
<td>Affixed on popcorn machine shelf facing out, light &quot;on.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>Trash emptied</td>
<td>No trash visible in either trash container (affix new bag).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: TASK CHECKLIST A MEMO

TO: Concession Stand Closing Employees  
FROM: E. Jones, Manager  
RE: Task Checklist A

In an effort to help make nightly closing of the concession stand go more smoothly, I request that the attached checklist be used by all concession employees who close at night. This checklist describes some but not all of the important parts of your job.

Please attempt to complete each of the concession closing tasks listed according to its relevant standard. For example, let's say that you just cleaned the display glass. You'll notice that the completion criterion indicates that "no finger marks or other smudges" should be visible. If you have, in fact, cleaned it that way, then sign your initials in the box provided. Any time you complete a task, you should sign your initials.

All concession employees who close the stand at night are required to report their performance on these checklists. The purpose of this is to simply help you do your job more easily. The data on how well each employee does will not be closely examined.

Place your nightly checklist in your own personal folder by date.

Please keep this memo for your own personal record.
APPENDIX D: TASK CHECKLISTS A AND B MEMO

TO: Concession Stand Closing Employees

FROM: E. Jones, Manager

RE: Task Checklists A and B

Thank you for complying with the instructions several days back that requested you to use the task checklist to help you close the concession stand at night.

As you could tell, several tasks were not included on that checklist. Those tasks have been compiled and now form this second checklist (Checklist B) to be used along with the first checklist (Checklist A) from this point forward.

You now have a complete set of important concession stand closing tasks. You should attempt to complete these tasks each night.

If two employees close the stand, then I suggest that each be responsible for one checklist apiece. (Remember to initial each task you complete.) If only one employee closes the stand at night, then s/he will be responsible for the tasks on both checklists.

Please keep this memo for your personal record.
APPENDIX F: NO PRAISE FORMAT AGENDA (FOR RECORDING ACCURACY)
FOR 3- TO 5-MINUTE MEETING WITH EMPLOYEE

Use this format when the employee's report of his/her own performance differs 11% or more from the data that management obtained with the accuracy check. This means that the employee must have accurately reported 34 or less of the total 38 tasks.

NO PRAISE FORMAT

1. Avoid smiling. Keep the "tone" of this brief meeting serious.

2. "The purpose of this quick meeting is to discuss the results of a random check that was done on your checklist the last time you closed the concession stand."

3. "The last time you closed, you reported completing ___% of the identified tasks. My observation indicated that same night that you completed ___%. There is a difference here of ___%. (Pause.)

4. "The tasks we disagreed on were: (list each)."
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.
   f.
   g.
   h.

5. "Please try to be more accurate when you monitor your own performance."

6. "Do you have any questions related to this?"

7. "Okay, that's all." (Avoid smiling.)
APPENDIX E: TASK CHECKLIST A ACCURACY CHECKS MEMO

TO: Concession Stand Closing Employees
FROM: E. Jones, Manager
RE: Task Checklist A Random Checks

The Assistant Manager and I will soon begin randomly checking approximately one of every two checklists completed by all concession closing employees.

We will do this by going over the concession stand with a copy of Checklist A ourselves. We are not implying that you have, thus far, been inaccurately reporting. We simply would like the most accurate information possible.

This monitoring will occur after each concession person has left for the night.

Please continue to deposit your nightly checklist in your own personal folder.

Thank you.
APPENDIX G: PRAISE FORMAT AGENDA (FOR RECORDING ACCURACY)
FOR 3- TO 5-MINUTE MEETING WITH EMPLOYEE

Use this format when the employee's report of his/her own performance is within 10% of the percentage you obtained with your accuracy check the same night. This means that the employee must have accurately reported at least 35 of the total tasks.

EXAMPLES OF SCORING

90% = 17/18 You and the employee agreed on 17 tasks
90% = 35/38 You and the employee agreed on 35 tasks

PRAISE FORMAT

1. Smile frequently during this meeting and keep the tone congenial and light.

2. "The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the good results of a random check that was done on your Checklist (A or B) the last time you closed." "Okay?"

3. "The last time you closed the concession stand, you reported completing ____% of the identified tasks. My observation indicated you completed ____%. (Smile.) I'm glad our percentages are so close.

4. "Thanks for accurately reporting your work to me, (employee's name)."

5. "Are there any questions about this that I can answer for you?"

6. "Well then, that's all (employee's name)."

7. "Thanks again."
TO: Concession Stand Closing Employees
FROM: E. Jones, Manager
RE: Task Checklists A and B Random Checks

Thank you for understanding the purpose of the random accuracy checks that began several days ago on Checklist A.

It becomes necessary now, however, to add Checklist B into the random check routine. This means that the Assistant Manager and I will be randomly checking both checklists for accuracy.

The same ratio of random checks will be used as before. That is, one of every two turned-in checklists will be evaluated. All concession employees who close at night are required to use these checklists.

These random checks on Checklists A and B will begin for you on the night you receive this memo.

Thank you.
APPENDIX I: PERFORMANCE STANDARD MEMO

TO: Concession Stand Closing Employees

FROM: E. Jones, Manager

RE: Ninety-five Percent Performance Standard

From this point onward, every concession employee should complete 95% or more of the tasks on both checklists. This means that a total of 35 or more must be completed and initialed each night.

We will continue to spot-check for recording accuracy in addition to this new change. Please be accurate.

Keep this memo for your personal record.

Thank you.
APPENDIX J: PRAISE FORMAT (FOR PERFORMANCE)

Use this format in conjunction with either the "Praise" or "No Praise" format, depending on how accurate the employee self-recorded (see other "Praise" and/or "No Praise" directions).

PRAISE FORMAT

1. Same as the applicable "Praise" or "No Praise" format for the self-recording accuracy meeting.

2. Same as the other "Praise" format.

3. "Your task performance was ____% the last time you worked. Nice work, (employee's name). You (were above or met) the standard of 95%. Please keep up the good work."

4. Same as the other "Praise" format.
APPENDIX K: NO PRAISE FORMAT (FOR PERFORMANCE)

Use this format in conjunction with either the "Praise" or "No Praise" format, depending on how accurate the employee self-recorded (see other "Praise" and "No Praise" directions).

NO PRAISE PERFORMANCE FORMAT

1. Same as the applicable "Praise" or "No Praise" format for the self-recording accuracy meeting.

2. Same as #2 for the other "No Praise" format.

3. "The tasks not completed were: (list each)."
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.
   f.
   g.
   h.

4. "You completed ____ % of the tasks the last time you worked. This percent is below the 95% standard by ____ %. Please try to do better next time."


Currie, R. A. Production achievement monitor, or money is the true incentive. *Bobbin*, 1979, 21(3), 174-178.


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