

Operational Definition Instructions

Purpose: To ensure that all persons collecting data collect it in the same way.

Tools: Flip Chart/White Board, Post-it Notes, Pens/Markers and/or OPDEF.xls

Who: Process Owner, Practitioner, Team

Instructions:

1. Ask one or two team members to answer the questions in the left column of the worksheet. These answers become your “definition”.
2. Ask different team members to read the definition and try to shoot holes in it. Make revisions as appropriate.
3. If relevant, check the answers with the customer. Is the definition exactly the same as theirs?
4. Develop job aids as appropriate. For example, show a range of color swatches to show acceptable and unacceptable shades. Compile a set of photographs on what is/isn't a smear.
5. Have people who were not involved in developing your definition apply it in collecting data. Plan to observe the testers to watch for problem areas and sources of confusion.
6. Finalize the definition and train all data collectors in its use.