



Singapore Healthcare
Management 2019

A Simple Algorithm to Job Redesigning: SGH Division of Medicine (DOM) Admin Case Study

Gary Ong^[1], Ang Yi Lin^[1], Jeslyn Tay^[1], Yuen Bi Huan^[2]

^[1] Division of Medicine ^[2] Elective Care Centre

Singapore General Hospital



Singapore
General Hospital
SingHealth

A. Introduction & Problem Statement

In Y2015, Division of Medicine (DOM) initiated a restructuring exercise for the administrative team, with the mission of centralising all department administrative staff under DOM. The internal Change Management Team (CMT), comprising a Manager and 5 Executives, was formed to implement the change plan across the 15 DOM departments, involving about 40 department admin staff (non-exempt). Opportunities to optimise workflows and work practices were presented.

After the CMT had performed a preliminary understanding of the daily operations and processes undertaken by the departments, the 2 key findings which arose were as follow:

1. Fragmented and unclear jobscope; and
2. Equity of workload.

B. Objectives

The CMT acknowledged the variances in work practices across the departments and hence, decided to address these problems by developing the following objectives:

1. Ensure efficiency and clarity of work performed;
2. Promote co-creation of new jobscope(s) with staff by being transparent in job redesign process;
3. Ensure equitable workload distribution; and
4. Instill ownership and accountability of work.

The above objectives will then guide the CMT on the engagement approach and allow facilitate a more deliberated planning of work during the info gathering and discussion stages.

It is very important to engage staff actively with absolute transparency to minimise hoarding of information and dissonance.

C. Methodology

1. Develop a list of major work functions to categorise job items accordingly, as seen in the table below:

Clinical Services	Education	Research
Finance	HR	General Admin

2. Design an excel template with fields to indicate "Job Item Description", "Work Function", "Frequency" and "Complexity". An additional parameter for "Workload" can be added for volume-driven jobs. To also create a mapping table to convert inputs under "Frequency", "Complexity" and "Workload" columns into scores.

	Job Item Description	Work Function	Frequency	Complexity	Workload
Generic					
1	Eg. Asset verification	Finance	Annually	Moderate	Low
Dept-Specific					
1	Eg. Triaging of poly referrals	Clinical Svcs	Daily	Easy	High

Frequency	Score	Complexity	Score	Workload	Score
Annually	1	Easy	1	Low	1
Quarterly	2	Moderate	2	Moderate	2
Monthly	3	Difficult	3	High	3
Daily	4				

3. Work with staff to populate the exhaustive list of job items with the corresponding scores for each column.
4. Conduct team meeting to initiate job redesigning exercise with staff in full view of individual staff's inputs by shifting job items flexibly among staff, in accordance to guiding principles and work equity (i.e. scores must match with job grades). Scores are computed by multiplying the numerical values in the "Frequency", "Complexity" and "Workload" columns. Example of a completed template:

Staff A Senior Secretary		Staff B Associate Executive		Staff C Associate	
Clinical Services		Education		Research	
Finance		General Admin			
HR					
Job Items	Score	Job Items	Score	Job Items	Score
A1	20	B1	12	C1	8
A2	36	B2	18	C2	12
A3	6	B3	12	C3	12
A4	32	B4	24	C4	6
A5	18	B5	8		
A6	4				
Total	116	Total	74	Total	38

5. Achieve consensus with all staff on the outcomes and implementation plan (with timeline or milestones).

D. Results

This methodology was applied to the Department of Internal Medicine, Department of Respiratory & Critical Care Medicine and Undergraduate Education admin teams. Results were promising:



Staff actively participates in co-creating jobscope – Job clarity and ownership.



1 staff was right-sited to another team to provide admin support – Better manpower allocation.



Staff is in-charge of a few work domains and job items are seen through to completion by each staff – Accountability.



Supervisor has better oversight of team's workload and able to assign work better – Better team management.



Awareness of each staff's jobscope – Ease of work coverage and equity.



CMT has deeper understanding of admin work which can lead to work improvements – Lean.

E. Conclusion

The CMT met the objectives and gained better insights from this co-creation exercise, which promoted job ownership, personal accountability and clarity of work. An added benefit was the establishment of a group psychological contract to maintain the integrity of the agreed jobscope.

From the supervisory angle, the defined list of jobscope allow opportunities to further optimise the department work and harmonise across the Division admin. This is evident in DOM's recent admin right-sizing effort, resulting in 4 headcount savings.

The Department of Gastroenterology & Hepatology and Department of Renal Medicine would be next in the pipeline.