

RADAR CHART/SPIDER CHART

What it is:

A radar chart graphically shows the size of the gaps among five to ten organizational performance areas. The chart displays the important categories of performance and makes visible concentrations of strengths and weaknesses.

When to use it:

A radar chart shows how a team has evaluated a number of organizational performance areas. It is therefore essential that the initial evaluation include varied perspectives to provide an overall realistic and useful picture of performance.

How to use it:

Create categories. Use headers from an affinity diagram or brainstorm major categories of organizational performance to be plotted. A radar chart can normally include five to ten categories.

Standardize performance definitions. Have all evaluators agree to use standardized definitions of both full performance and non-performance in each category so that ratings are performed consistently. Define the scoring range (e.g., 0 to 5 with 5 being full performance).

Rate each performance category. Each evaluator rates each category individually, and the team then develops an average or consensus score for each category. Alternatively, the team as a whole may initially develop an average or consensus score for each category.

Construct the chart.

1. Draw a large circle and insert as many spokes or radii as there are performance categories.
2. Around the perimeter of the circle, label each spoke with the title of a performance category.
3. Subdivide each spoke into the number of increments established in the rating scale. Label the center of the circle where spokes join as 0 (no performance) and place the highest rating number (full or exceptional performance) at the end of the spoke at the outer ring. (You may want to draw additional concentric circles linking equal values on each spoke.)

Plot the ratings. For each performance category, plot on the chart the associated rating. Then connect the plotted points on all the spokes. Highlight the enclosed central shape as necessary for ease in viewing.

Interpret and use the results. The resulting radar chart will graphically show areas of relative strength and relative weakness, as well as depicting general overall performance.

Radar/Spider Chart Example

