



How to Create Meaningful Metrics for Food Safety Programs

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Learning Objectives

- Describe the key principles of good metrics and why they matter for food safety.
- Recognize common pitfalls and challenges of measuring food inspection performance and how to avoid them.
- Understand how to create effective metrics for your food inspection programs and how to use them to drive continuous improvement and public health impact.
- Adapt your program's goals and objectives to create meaningful metrics for inspection staff performance.
- Apply best practices and tools for designing metrics, collecting & analyzing data, and reporting measurements that align with your goals and stakeholders' needs.

Why are goals important?



Practice #1

Think of a time when you have experienced a **successful** goal.

- What was the goal?
- Why did it succeed?

Think of a time when you have experienced an **unsuccessful** goal.

- What was the goal?
- Why did it fail?

What did you learn more from?



**What are the goals for
your food safety program?**



What makes goals successful?



Successful

- Focus
- Leverage
- Engagement
- Accountability

Unsuccessful

- Too many goals/No prioritization
- Lack of clarity/Too vague
- The “Whirlwind”



The “whirlwind” is the day-to-day operation



Breakthrough Goals vs. the Whirlwind

Breakthrough Goals

- Require a change in behavior
- Important
- You act on it
- New activities

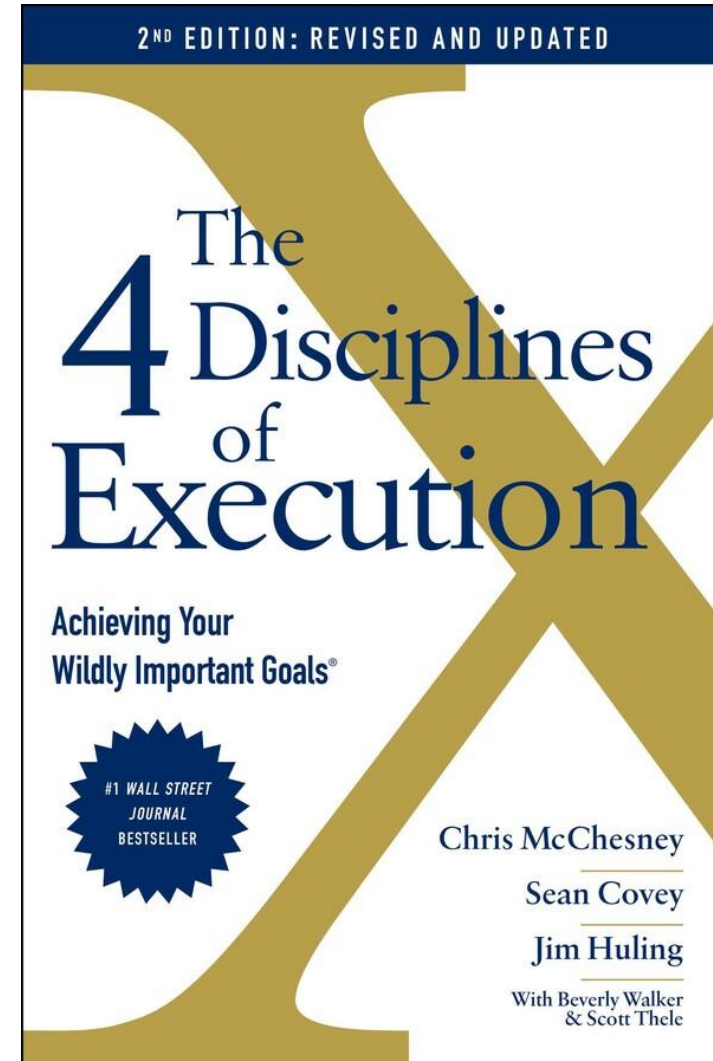
The Whirlwind

- Required to maintain operations
- Urgent
- Acts on you
- Life support



4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX) as a Model for Achieving Goals

1. Focus on the Wildly Important & set a Wildly Important Goal (WIG)
✓ *This brings **FOCUS***
2. Act on the Lead Measures
✓ *This brings **LEVERAGE***
3. Keep a Compelling Scoreboard
✓ *This brings **ENGAGEMENT***
4. Create a Cadence of Accountability
✓ *This brings **ACCOUNTABILITY***



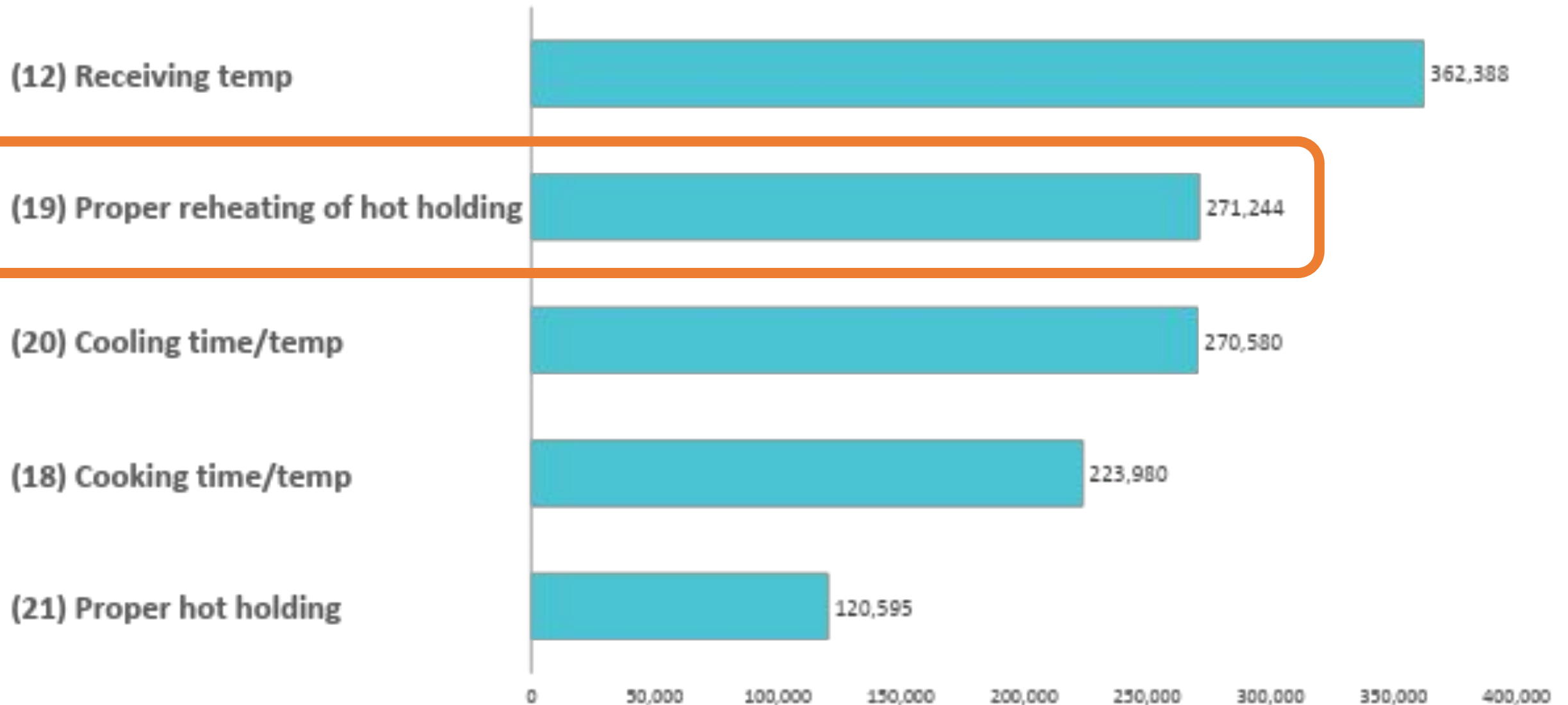
Discipline 1: Focus on the Wildly Important

- Focus your efforts on the one thing right now that will make the biggest difference: your Wildly Important Goal (WIG)
- Defines a starting line, a finish line, and a deadline
- In the form “move X to Y by when”
- Traps to avoid:
 - Creating too many WIGs
 - Choosing a WIG that is too broad
 - Creating a WIG that is aspirational but not measurable
 - Creating a WIG that is not aligned to the mission and vision of your organization



Top Risk Factors NOT OBSERVED

(n = 436,125)



Only 20% of Proper Reheating is Observed

Proper Reheating Compliance Status	# of Inspections	% of Total Applicable
In	63,218	19%
Out	2,266	1%
Not Observed	271,244	80%
Total	336,728	100%



WIG Example – Increase Observation Rate for Proper Reheating of Hot-Holding

- Increase proper reheating of hot-holding observations from 20% to 40% by June 30, 2025



Practice #2

Brainstorm possible WIGs for your team, program, or department.

Think about:

- What's the one area you want to achieve significant results?
- What will have the greatest contribution to your agency's mission?
- Is there an area that, if not addressed, would significantly impact your ability to fulfill that mission?

Make them in the form “from X to Y by when”



What are lag and lead measures – and why are they important?



Lag vs. Lead Measures

Lag

- Wildly Important Goals
- Tell you if you've met your goal

Lead

- Lead to Wildly Important Goals
- Tell you if you are likely to meet your goal
- Measures the actions – or behaviors – your team must do to reach the goal



Lead Measure (Metric) Characteristics

- Predictive: Measure something that leads to the goal
- Influenceable: Something you can influence
- Customized for the specific contribution an organizational level or team can make to the goal
- Should be measured daily or weekly



Lead Measures – Increase Observation Rate for Proper Reheating of Hot-Holding

- Lag:
 - Increase proper reheating of hot-holding observations from 20% to 40% by June 30, 2025
- Inspector:
 - Review your planned inspection schedule each week and identify facilities with reheating of hot-holding
 - Observe proper reheating in 50% of applicable inspections
- Supervisor:
 - Review inspection reports weekly, record % NO, and review during inspector one-on-one's
- Leader:
 - Review % NO weekly and discuss during supervisor meetings



Another example: Renewal Processing

- Lag:
 - All complete renewal applications are processed within 10 days of receipt.
- Admin Staff:
 - Review outstanding renewal applications daily.
- Supervisor:
 - Examine delinquent renewal reports weekly and review during staff one-on-one's.
- Leader:
 - Review latest renewal dates every week.



Practice #3

Think back to the WIGs you created. Choose one and **create 1 lead measure** for each of the following:

- 1) Leaders in your program
- 2) Supervisors
- 3) Inspectors or front-line staff

Remember:

- Predictive of your WIG
- Something you can influence
- Measured frequently (daily, weekly)



Special Consideration: Data

- What data do you need to track your lead and lag measures?
- How will you collect it?
- How will you ensure data quality?



What is the best way to measure progress toward a goal?

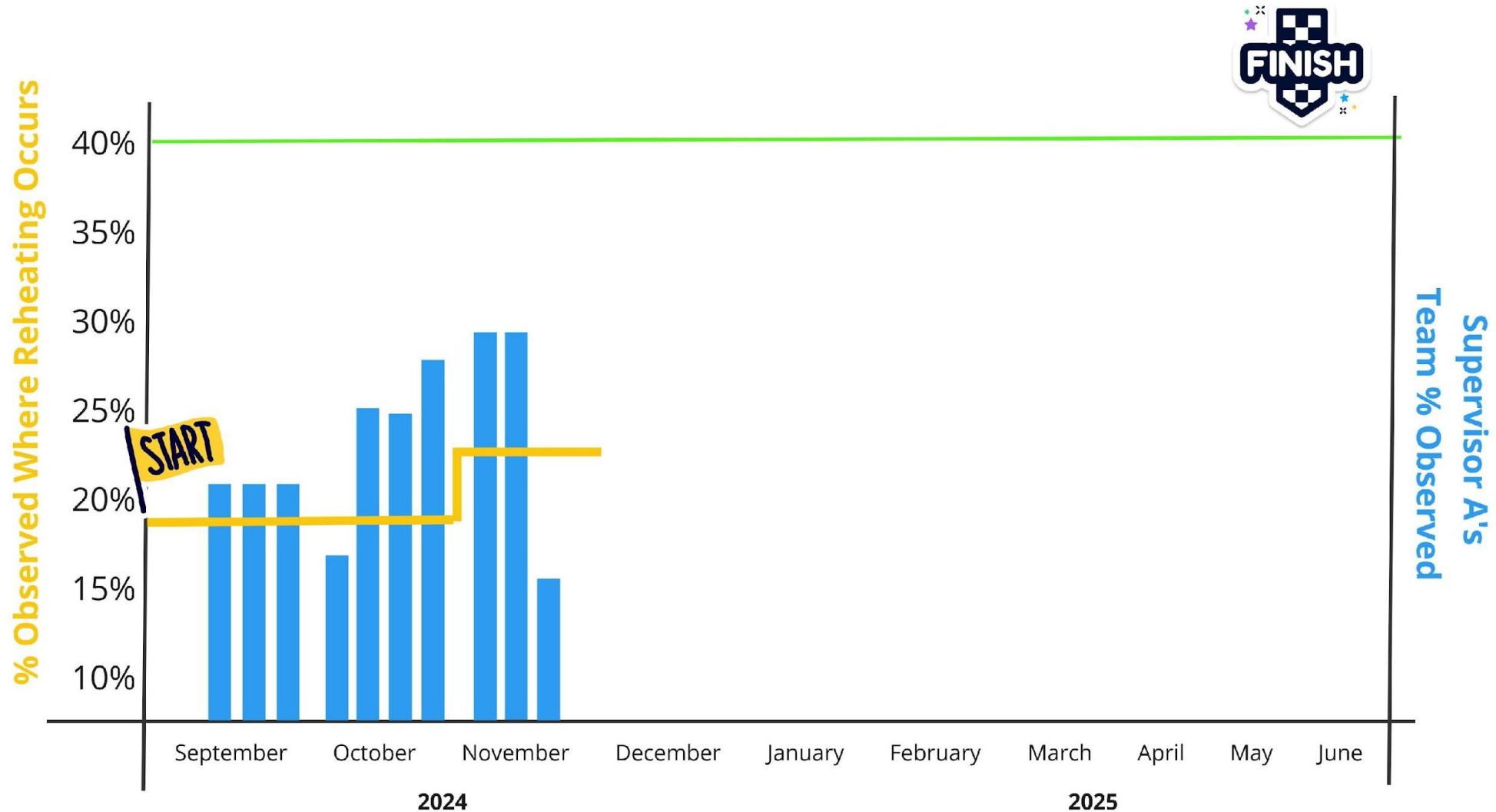


Discipline 3: Keep a Compelling Scoreboard

- Based on the principle of engagement
 - Provides a visual representation of the bet the team is making (that moving the lead measure will move the lag measure)
 - Signals to the team that winning matters
 - Provides a counterbalance to the urgency of the whirlwind
- Tracks measurements at all levels
- Characteristics
 - 1) Is it simple?
 - 2) Can I see it easily?
 - 3) Does it show lead *and* lag measures?
 - 4) Can I tell at a glance if I'm winning?



Scoreboard Example – Increase Observation Rate for Proper Reheating of Hot-Holding



Practice #4

Think back to the WIGs and lead measures you created. **Sketch a compelling scoreboard** that features both.

Also jot down:

- Where will your data come from?
- How often will the scorecard be updated?



How do you stay on track?



Discipline 4: Create a Cadence of Accountability

- This is where the execution actually happens
- Provides the expectation of accountability and being truly committed to the WIG and your team
- Weekly “WIG Sessions”:
 - Short (≤ 30 minutes)
 - Mandatory attendance
 - Review scoreboard
 - Report on last week’s commitments
 - Plan and set next week’s commitments



Commitment Statements

- “What can I do this week – 1 or 2 important things – to impact the lead measure?”
- They may be what you would be doing naturally, but committing to it fights off the whirlwind



Practice #5

Think back to the lead measures your created.

Propose one or two examples of weekly commitments that would support the lead measures.





Thank you!