Leading & Lagging Indicators

**Leading indicators** are activities that should be trended as they predict the outcomes (i.e., lagging indicators). Quotas or goals should only be placed on lagging indicators and never on leading indicators. Placing a goal on a leading indicator will result in gaming and generate the wrong results.

**Definition**—Measures that “drive” or lead to the performance of lag measures; normally measuring intermediate processes and activities.

**Examples:**
- Average Speed of Answer (ASA)
- Average Handle Time (AHT)
- First Contact Resolution (FCR)
- Number of contacts

**Advantages:**
- Predictive in nature and allows the organization to make adjustments based on results

**Challenges:**
- May prove difficult to identify and capture; often new measures with no history within the organization

**Lagging Indicator**

**Definition**—Measures focusing on results at the end of a time period, normally characterizing historical performance. Also referred to as Key Results Indicator (KRI)

**Examples:**
- Total Customer Contacts
- Total Incidents
- Total Problems

**Advantages:**
- Normally easy to identify and capture

**Challenges:**
- Historical in nature and does not reflect current activities
- Lacks predictive power

**Leading vs. Lagging Indicators**
As our terminology evolves in the support center, when we are taking about leading indicators, we are really talking about performance indicators. When we are talking about lagging indicators, we are really talking about Key Results Indicators (KRIs).

It is important to emphasize that goals and objectives should be based on lagging indicators whenever possible.

**Setting Goals on Lagging Indicators**
When setting goals, be aware that goals will drive behaviors. Think of how you want to drive those desired behaviors. When you develop the processes and the metrics that will help to measure their success, also develop a list of behaviors that you want your support analysts to exhibit. If you identify and document the desired behavior, it becomes the basis for the behavior.