

## PURPOSE OF PROJECT

The Brandywine Valley Chorale (BVC) is a group of approximately 60 singers from all over Chester County, PA. The Mission of BVC is to foster and share the art of choral music, as well as serve the community, through the pursuit of choral excellence in a wide variety of repertoire and performance opportunities. The auditioned members of the chorus share a love of music and a commitment to excellence.

The purpose of this task analysis is to solicit the opinions of relevant stakeholders regarding the current condition of the group, seeking ideas for improvement to:

- determine the effectiveness of weekly rehearsals
- maximize rehearsal time outside of choir
- determine any specific problems and difficulties that occur

in order to be as prepared as possible come concert time.

Without the task analysis we risk high attrition and low performance values from current and future members. The overall quality of the choir's performance may suffer.

## NEED ANALYSIS THEORIES USED

### Allison Rossett

Allison Rossett's theory seeks to identify gaps in individual and small group performance. To discover and respond to performance issues by identifying the source of the problems, then gathering opinions and ideas from soft data sources, and tracking front-end activities.

You do this by soliciting opinions on optimal, actual, causes, feelings, and solutions.

Optimal: Who is the exemplary performer, and what makes them that way?

Actual: What are the rehearsal habits of the average member?

Feelings: How do current members feel about the expectations set forth by the BVC?

Causes: Do members lack skill or knowledge? Is the environment in the way? What are the incentives to rehearse? Are members sufficiently motivated to rehearse outside of practice?

Solutions: What suggestions do members have to fix any gaps/ problems found?

### Zemke & Kramlinger's Figuring Things Out (FTO)

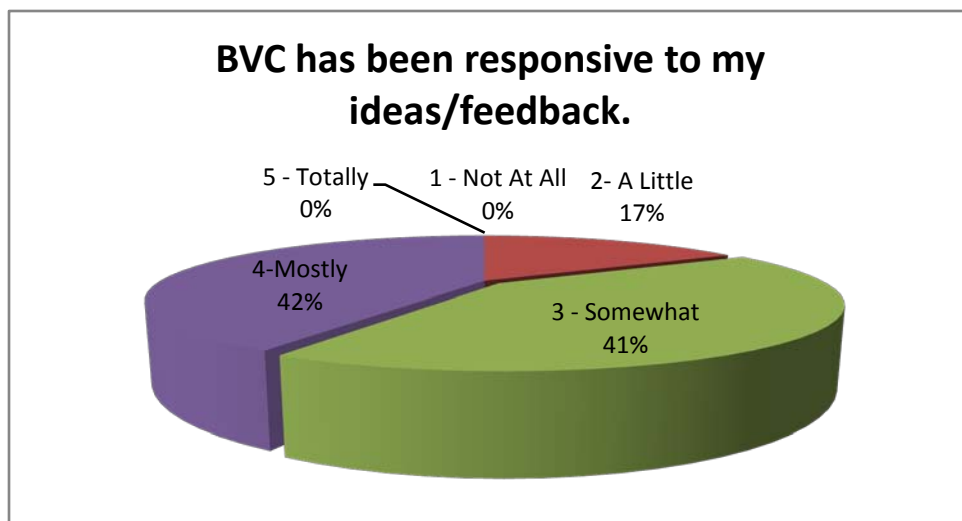
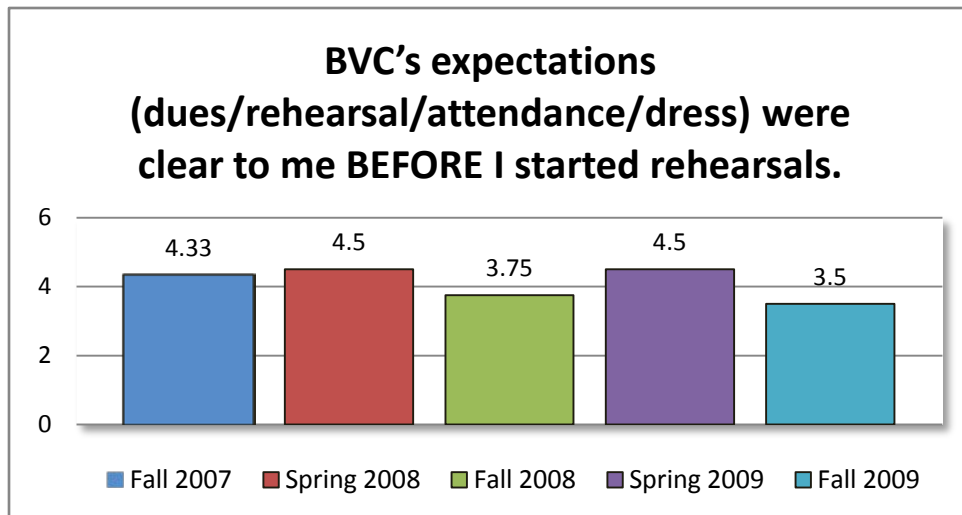
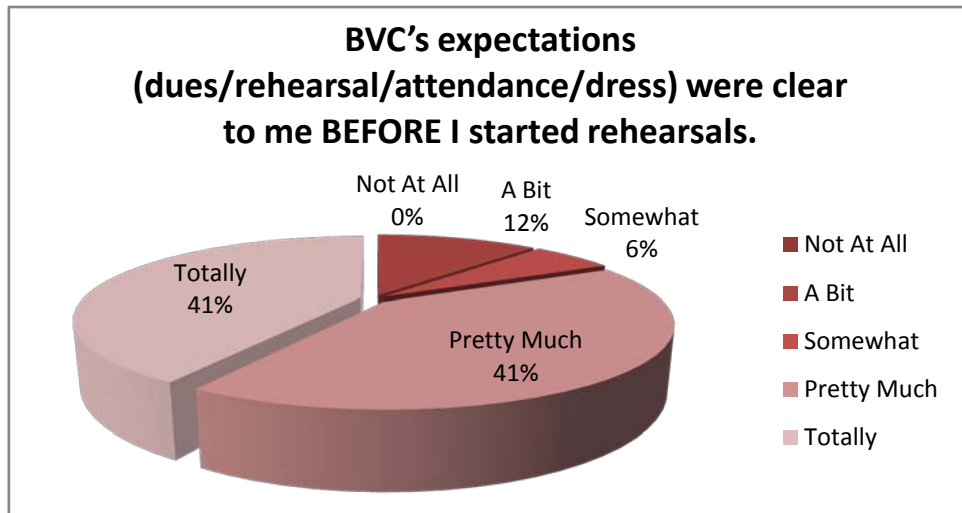
FTO was chosen in order to determine the relationship between the performer, the local performance environment, and the overall organizational climate.

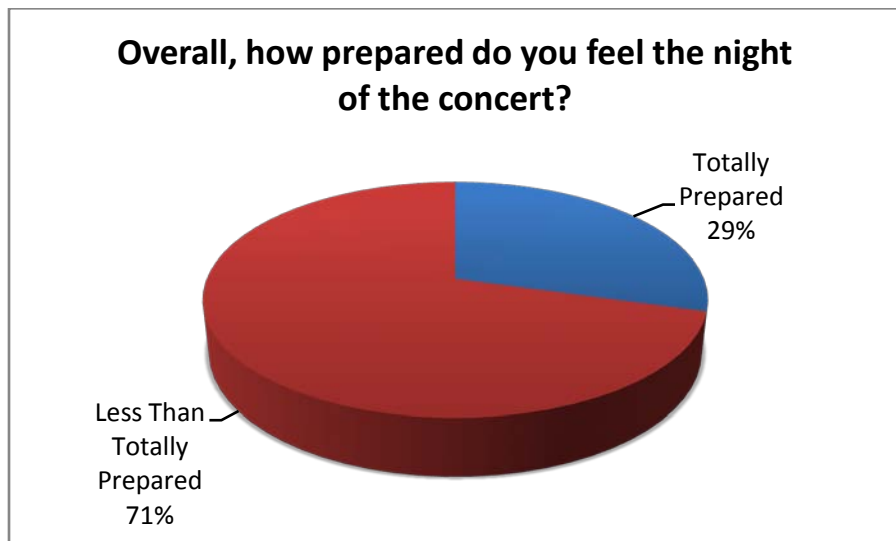
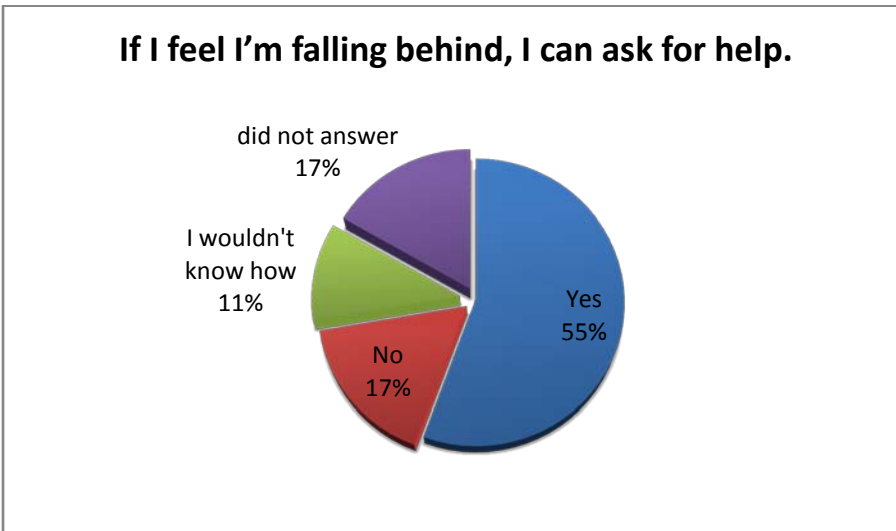
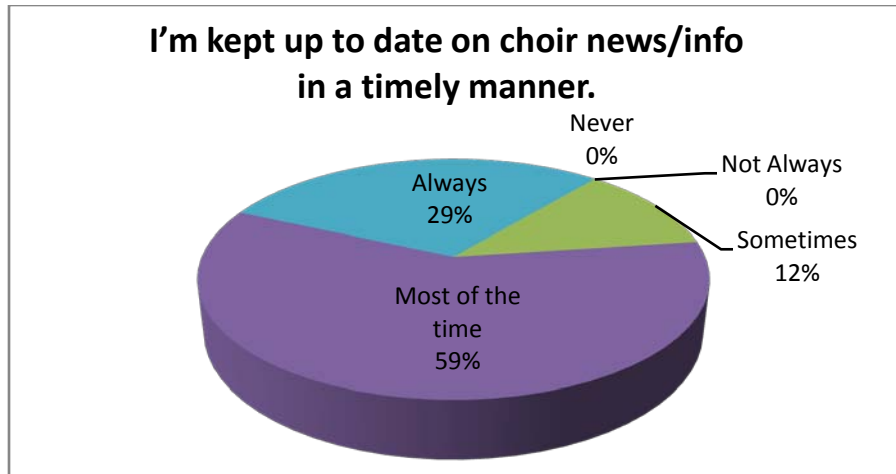
Questions to be asked: Are the mission goals of the BVC translated effectively into actions at the operational level? Do members feel that their ideas are taken seriously and treated with respect? Are the objectives and expectations of the choir fully understood and met by members? Does the BVC give enough support and feedback to their members in order to optimize their performance?

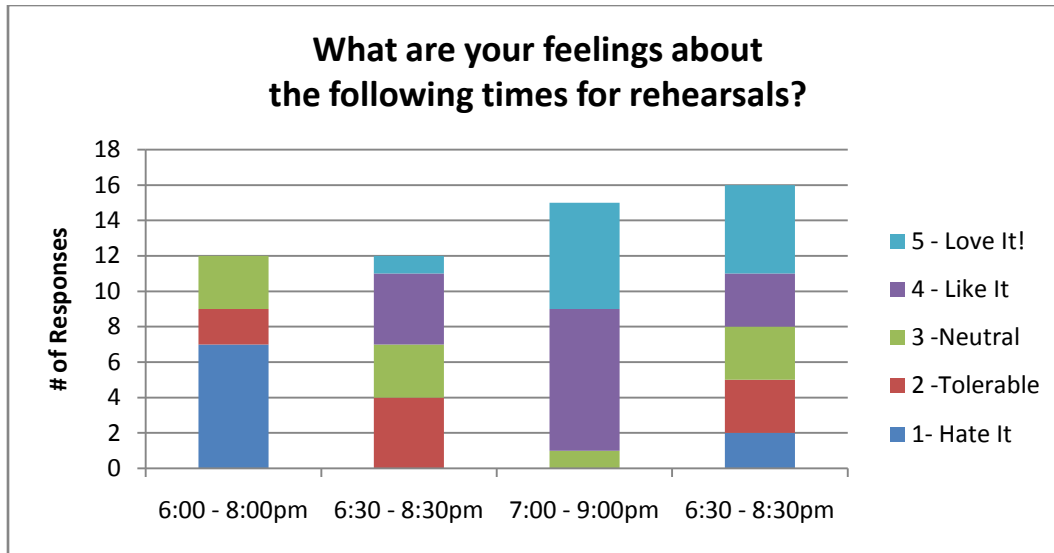
### **DATA GATHERING TOOLS**

1. A **questionnaire** via SurveyMonkey.com to gather data on causes, feelings, and solutions.
2. An informal/conversational **interview** with DAVID VALLEE to discover attitudes, opinions, issues, and facts not anticipated beforehand.
3. An open-ended **email** query/ response from RUTH RUSSELL – an optimal performer.
4. Existing Data – **The BVC Handbook** captures the “climate and culture” of the BVC, as well as the objectives and expectations of its members.
5. Existing Data – **The BVC Audition Form** captures the knowledge/skills/ability requirements needed to be a member of the BVC.

**THE RESULTS – Data Report**







|  |                                     |       |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------|
| I am/have been involved with other choirs.   | Yes                                 | 76.5% |
| I am aware of the BVC Choir Handbook   | No                                  | 23.5% |
| AND joined in the Fall   | No                                  | 75%   |
| AND don't know the attendance policy   | True                                | 31%   |
| I know the BVC attendance policy and its consequences  | False                               | 29.4% |
| AND joined the first year.   | False                               | 80%   |
| I am aware of the BVC Choir Handbook   | True                                | 76.5% |
| AND don't know the attendance policy   | True                                | 31%   |
| Missing rehearsal is sometimes necessary, and should not be penalized.                             | True                                | 100%  |
| If I miss rehearsal I know how to make sure I am caught up for next rehearsal.                     | No                                  | 23.5% |
| If I feel I am feeling behind, I can ask for help.   | No                                  | 45%   |
| I feel I spend enough time practicing on my own  | I could do more                     | 41.2% |
| BVC's expectations (dues/rehearsal/attendance/dress) were clear to me BEFORE I started rehearsals. | Totally                             | 41.2% |
| BVC has been responsive to my ideas/feedback.  | Average Satisfaction Rating 3.25 /5 |       |

## THE RESULTS – Data Analysis

Since most respondents (76.5%) reported having previous choral experience, one would expect a higher caliber of motivation, and knowledge about common choir practices.

The BVC Handbook “outlines the expectations for membership in our organization,” yet not all members (23.5%) are even aware of its existence. Of those that are aware of it, some are unaware of the information it contains. Despite containing the BVC’s attendance policy, 31% who knew of the BVC Handbook, did not know what the attendance policy was. Currently, the BVC Handbook is unavailable online.

In fact, 59% did not feel totally clear on BVC’s expectations (“dues / rehearsal / attendance / dress”). After BVC’s first Fall, new members that started in the Fall felt less clear about expectations than members that joined in the Spring. In my personal experience, I did not know I would have to pay \$150 in dues, and buy a \$80 concert dress until *after* I had already committed to join (in Fall 2007) and well after rehearsals had already begun.

Communication issues continue to emerge as 71% felt they are not always kept up to date on BVC news/information in a timely manner, and 80% of respondents who joined the first year, still do not know a common expectation (the attendance policy). 41% felt the BVC had been “somewhat” responsive to their ideas/feedback (with no one feeling “totally” responsive) and an average satisfaction rating of 3.25 out of 5.

Outside of weekly rehearsals, BVC members are expected to spend time rehearsing on their own. However, while 53% said that they solicited for BVC sponsorships, and 94% had distributed BVC concert promotional materials, 41% responded that they could “do more” when it came to rehearsing on their own. On average, respondents spent 2.67 hours per week practicing outside of rehearsal. My interviewee commented that he didn’t rehearse “as much as [he] should,” and also wished that “everybody else practiced a bit more.”

While all respondents agreed the missing rehearsal is sometimes necessary, and should not be penalized, 23.5% are not clear how to make up for missing a rehearsal, and 45% do not feel like they can ask for help if they feel they are falling behind.

Is it any wonder only 29% felt “fully prepared” the concert come performance time?

## **THE RESULTS – Recommendations**

The BVC needs to step up its communication efforts in order to encourage the full participation of its members. Though it may have clear expectations available (via the BVC Handbook) it does not clearly express them to members. It also does not provide clear guidance and support to members who may require assistance. Perceived lack of communication and support breeds uncertainty, and reduces the motivation to do extra work. Less time is committed to practicing outside of weekly rehearsals, thereby creating a less than optimal feeling of readiness come concert time.

Possible solutions to these issues include:

- Clarify and keep updated an online source of information for members.
- Make any and all support materials (recordings of songs, songs broken down by part) are available and easily accessible by all members early on in the season.
- Put the BVC Handbook online, and make sure it is easily findable.
- Create section leaders (one person per singing part) to make sure all members can stay up to date on any markings or notes generated during the weekly rehearsal.