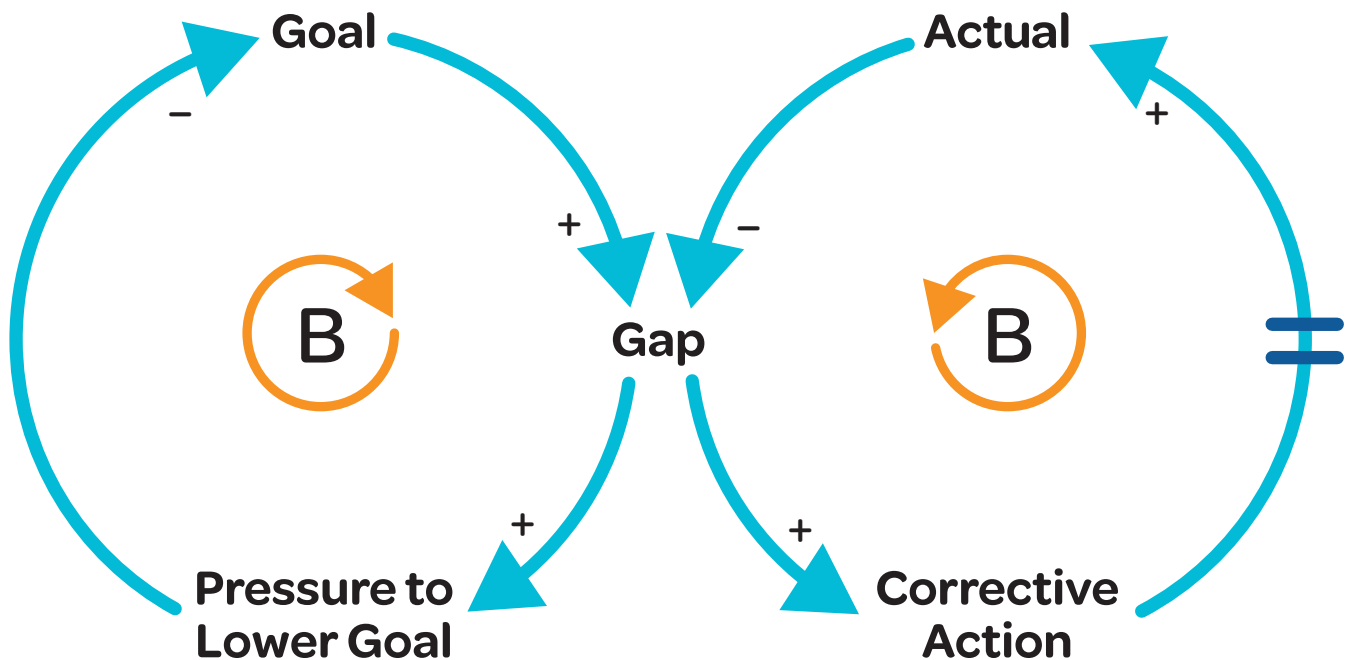


Drifting Goals

When goals are lowered because of growing pressure to increase performance



Description

In a drifting goals scenario, there are two different ways to address the gap between the actual state of the system and an identified goal. One way is to take some corrective action, although there is often a time delay between the action and signs of improvement to the actual state of the system. When pressure mounts, oftentimes the more expedient way to address the gap is to lower the goal.

Examples

- Challenging skills, e.g., learning to play an instrument
- Goals for a student that create frustration

Ways out

If performance is gradually decreasing, it is possible that goals are drifting. Explore the influences that may be pressuring the system into lowering expectations or eroding goals.

As a tool for prevention

The drifting goals archetype is a valuable tool to use when working on identified gaps in a system. It is important to build an understanding that patience is needed when experiencing the delay between delay between corrective action and improvement to the actual state of the system.

Questions to ask

- What indicators suggest that goals or standards may be eroding over time?
- How does the level of comfort impact the tendency to lower expectations?
- After implementing corrective actions, how can we hold the tension and encourage patience, knowing that delays may exist before increases in performance are observed?