Brainstorming for Improvement

Purpose: To provide a structured process in which participants brainstorm and create a prioritized list for improvements based on data.

Preparation:
1. Bring the data questions from the Data Walk
2. Bring the Root Cause Analysis Fishbone charts
3. Bring 2x2 sticky note pads

Process: Explain to the team that based on the root cause analysis discussion, each person has ideas about how to improve the situation. This process will enable each person to put their ideas on the table for discussion.

1. Each person writes one idea for improvement per sticky note.
2. They may use as many sticky notes as needed.
3. Then all of the sticky notes from the entire group get placed on one table.
4. The group silently reads the notes and organizes them into categories (no talking)
   a. They may create duplicate sticky notes if they think it belongs in two categories.
5. Then 2-3 people from the group are asked to label the groupings (summarize with one to two words)
6. Divide the group into small groups and give each group one category of sticky notes.
7. Make a list of all of the ideas for each category and share that with the larger group.
8. Create a master list of all of the ideas for improvement.
9. Ask for clarifications, explanations as appropriate

Voting: Nominal Group Technique

1. Voting to identify the items that the group thinks will have the greatest impact or are most important:

    a. Label each idea with a letter from the alphabet (one letter per idea)

    b. Ask if any of the ideas are repetitive or should be combined.
        i. Team members suggest combinations
           1. letter a goes into letter b
        ii. If anyone on the team disagrees, the items stay separate
        iii. If everyone agrees, they become combined
        iv. Continue until the team feels there are no more combinations

    c. Have each person number a piece of paper as follows:
        i. 5
        ii. 4
        iii. 3
        iv. 2
        v. 1

    d. Each person writes the letter of the idea they feel is most important next to number 5, then continues down to number 1
        i. Only one letter for each voting number

    e. Facilitator says "how many votes did each person give for letter a" and counts the number of votes.

    f. Continue counting votes for all lettered improvement ideas

    g. At the end, generally, several ideas emerge as the groups consensus on areas of improvement

Time: 2-3 hours

Next Steps: Once the team has identified, discussed and decided on the top areas for improvement the next step is to write an improvement plan.