

ORACLE tutorial

Lesson 2 (Database Management & DBA Checklist)

DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Database Administrators in high stress environments often operate in crisis management mode, which escalates to poor database performance. As Peter F. Drucker states: "A well-managed factory is boring. Nothing exciting happens in it because the crises have been anticipated and have been converted into routine." A database management system is a virtual factory taking raw data and producing organized information. Maintaining stable information systems is essential to the success of many businesses. The stability of the database environment indicates the success of the database administrator (DBA).

All DBAs go into the job hoping to be successful in maintaining the perfect database environment. The problem is computers can't talk, but users can. DBAs often believe maintaining a stable environment means they must react to all user requests. The DBA eventually winds up slumped over the keyboard consoling the system on its first birthday instead of home with the spouse on their child's first birthday. The DBA must be proactive. They must allocate time in their day to review key areas of the system and resolve problems before a crisis evolves. A basic understanding of the Oracle RDBMS and user requirements are essential to developing sound checklists. There are a number of sources for improving one's knowledge on the administration of the Oracle environment. Publications from user conferences (such as white papers), the Oracle manuals and formal training are all excellent ways to improve knowledge and add value to any Oracle administrator. The more you read, the more ideas you'll add to your bag of tricks. The more you test these ideas in your environment, the more you will improve your understanding of both Oracle and your environment. As a DBA, it is your job not only to understand how Oracle works, but to understand how your business works and what is required of the system to be successful. This is something that should be done before tuning takes place.

Defining Checklists

After you have a basic understanding of how Oracle functions, and you understand what the users need to run the business, you can begin listing the tasks required to meet the needs of the users and keep the system stable. When defining points in the checklists, keep the following thoughts in mind:

- **Recovery.** Ensuring the integrity of the database is the primary concern. You must ensure the data can be recovered with in a time-frame acceptable to the business.
- **Space Management.** Proper space management is essential not only to the stability of the database but to performance and ultimately cost.
- **Performance.** Maintaining optimal performance keeps the users happy and ensures the most cost effective use of system resources.

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