

Problem Solving Skills for Teams

*Successful teams are not teams without problems;
they are simply teams who learn to solve their problems.*

This workshop teaches a simple, yet effective, four-step process for dealing with difficult operational problems that supervisors, team leaders, team facilitators, and team members often face.

What makes this course stand out from other problem-solving courses is that it focuses on a group or team approach to attacking problems. Participants focus not only on using the right approach to problem solving, but also on seeking the expertise and views of all members. By the end of the course, participants will have a solid foundation in problem identification, solution analysis, and measurement techniques.

Learning Objectives

- Identify and explain the three basic elements of a work problem.
- Define a problem, identify root cause, and prioritize possible solutions.
- Understand the *Cardinal Rule* in problem solving.
- Practice leading and participating in brainstorming sessions.
- Learn to use the problem priority grid - a powerful tool for setting group priorities.
- Use the measurement planning table to measure the success of solutions.
- Practice using seven very practical problem-solving tools.
- Understand and practice a four-step process for approaching, identifying, and solving difficult operational problems in the work place.
- Learn to teach others a systematic process to help teams or work groups approach and solve problems.

Audience

This course is helpful to anyone who faces problems on the job. Because it focuses on team or group problem-solving efforts, it is particularly effective when an entire intact team can attend the session. The approach, skills, and tools taught in this course are applicable to any department, any area, and all levels in the organization.

Course Outline

Module One: A Team Approach To Solving Problems

- The three basic elements of a problem
- Some definitions
- Element 1: The problem
- Prioritizing problems
- Element 2: The cause
- Root causes
- Element 3: The solution
- The cardinal rule in problem solving
- Some sample dialogues
- A four step problem solving process
- The team approach to solving problems

Module Two: Problems Solving Tools

- Seven problem-solving tools
- Tool 1: Brainstorming
- Tool 2: Cause and effect brainstorming
- Tool 3: Problem priority grid
- Tool 4: Measurement planning table
- Tool 5: Nominal group technique
- Tool 6: Bar charts
- Tool 7: Factor rating
- When to use the problem solving tools
- Practice In Solving Problems
- Group Exercise with Problem Solving Cases

Prerequisites

Completion of the *Team Member Responsibilities & Skills* course would be helpful, but is not required.

Program Format – 1 Day

The program is a one-day program that uses a highly interactive format. It includes a combination of discussion, small group exercises, and case studies that can be customized for any organization. Participants will engage in practical exercises using the four-step problem solving process and the seven essential tools. By the end of the day, team members will have started to work on solutions to specific, real problems that face the team. The maximum class size is 20, but for optimum results 12-16 participants is ideal.