



# Problem Solving & Decision Making

work skills qualifications • employability skills system

*Solutions to significant problems facing modern society demand a widespread qualitative improvement in thinking and understanding. We need a breakthrough in the quality of thinking employed by both decision makers and by each of us in our daily affairs.*

- Ornstein, in Costa, 1991

- Have you ever “solved” a problem only to have it return again?
- Have you ever been part of a team that failed its assignment because team members spent most of their time trying to define the meaning of words or to justify the set of information?
- Have you ever found yourself or your team ended up with an option that was different from the one that was pre-determined as a result of the analysis?
- Have you ever been caught in a situation where a solution to a problem caused a new problem?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you are among thousands of people throughout business, industries and government who also experience the frustration of these problems - problems that can impact on your work performance and the quality of your organisation’s products and services

## **Operational Level:**

### **Programme Objectives:**

**At the end of the programme the participants will be able to:**

- ◆ Anticipate the problem using logical deduction
- ◆ Identify symptom(s) that could lead to potential problem
- ◆ Identify deviations from norm
- ◆ List down clearly and accurately findings based on observations and investigation
- ◆ Derive root cause(s) of the problem
- ◆ Generate practical idea(s) relevant to the root cause(s) of the problem
- ◆ Generate a list of pertinent criteria necessary to the resolution of the problem
- ◆ Communicate the preferred solution using the most suitable mode of communication
- ◆ Develop an action plan to implement the selected solution
- ◆ Evaluate effectiveness of the implemented solution
- ◆ Identify preventive measure(s) to avoid similar occurrence in the future

### **Target Audience:**

Operational Level - Operational level staff who are involved in the process of problem identification and problem solving. The approach at this level will be simplified and moderated to an appropriate level to facilitate effective learning for operational staff.

### **Methodology**

The methodology is participative and activity oriented, keeping the process totally learner centred. Knowledge and skills are transferred through Individual and Group activity, Behaviour Modelling (Role Play) and Critiquing, Training Videos for reinforcement, Case Studies and appropriate Lecturettes, Practice... and Coaching !

## **Programme Outline:**

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- A **Anticipate and Identify Problems**
  - Recognize a problem area
  - Describe and assess the impact of a problem
  
- A **Generate and Evaluate Alternative Solutions to a Problem**
  - Generate and select ideas to solve a problem
  - Evaluate selected ideas for possible solutions to a problem
  
- A **Make a Decision and Take Personal Responsibility for it.**
  - Indicate a preferred solution and devise a plan to implement the selected solution
  - Evaluate and take ownership of the implemented solution

## **Supervisory Level:**

### **Programme Objectives:**

At the end of the programme the participants will be able to:

- ◆ Assess a situation before embarking on any action;
- ◆ Identify, Classify and Prioritise problems to ensure effective deployment of resources;
- ◆ Identify the different approaches for different situations;
- ◆ Identify and define “PROBLEM” specifically;
- ◆ Investigate a problematic situation and pin-point its root cause with confidence;
- ◆ Be more objective and assertive in extracting and generating information relevant in solving problems;
- ◆ Develop and Evaluate alternatives objectively so as to arrive at a well-informed and most balanced choice;
- ◆ Be more proactive through effective potential threat management process;
- ◆ Apply logical process in dealing with situations and making common sense more common with self and among team members;
- ◆ State the differences between Analytical and Creative Thinking;
- ◆ Facilitate the application of appropriate technique in coming out with creative and innovative solutions;
- ◆ Identify some of the barriers to creativity and how to overcome them.

### **Target Audience:**

Supervisory Level - Supervisors, & Section Leaders or those who will be promoted to this position

### **Methodology**

The methodology is participative and activity oriented, keeping the process totally learner centred. Knowledge and skills are transferred through Individual and Group activity, Behaviour Modelling (Role Play) and Critiquing, Training Videos for reinforcement, Case Studies and appropriate Lecturettes, Practice... and Coaching !

## Programme Outline:

- A **Assess The Situation (S.C.A.N)**
  - Spot & Separate all problems
  - Classify the Problems for appropriate actions
  - Assess Priorities deploy resources effectively
  - Notify Team members in order to gain commitment and build sense of ownership
  
- A **Definition of PROBLEM**
  - Why define
  - Establish common understanding
  - Understanding the difference between EXPECTED and ACTUAL
  
- A **Search For Cause (S.E.E.K)**
  - State Problem to maintain focus and keep on track
  - Establish Boundaries to gather and organise the data in structured manner
  - Examine Possible Causes - Listing of Possible Causes, Cross-Examination and Identify Most Likely Cause
  - K(C)apture Root Cause - Identify and verifying root cause
  
- A **Creative Thinking And Generating Alternative Solutions**
  - Major principles in creative thinking
  - Analytical vs Creative
  - Some brain booster technique
  - Barriers to creativity
  
- A **Select an Option (C.H.O.I.C.E)**
  - Create Statement to maintain focus in the decision making process
  - Highlight Criteria and identifying and differentiating between important and desirable
  - Organising Alternatives for a fair and objective evaluation
  - Identifying the most balanced alternative
  - Consider adverse consequences
  - Establish Best-Balanced Option
  - Presenting recommendation
  
- A **Take Action & Prevent Future Threats (P.R.O.A.C.T)**
  - Planning Statement to be clear of task at hand
  - Raise (Highlight) Potential threats that may hinder success
  - Observe the likely causes to prepare for a more-focused action plan
  - Apply Preventive Actions to prevent the threats from happening
  - Contingency Planning - Preparing plan B and preparing for the unexpected
  - Trigger / Activators

## **Managerial Level:**

### **Programme Objectives:**

At the end of the programme the participants will be able to:

- ◆ Assess a situation before embarking on any action;
- ◆ Identify, Classify and Prioritise problems to ensure effective deployment of organizational resources;
- ◆ Identify the different approaches for different situations;
- ◆ Identify and define “PROBLEM” specifically;
- ◆ Investigate a performance deficiency and pin-point its root cause with confidence;
- ◆ Be more objective and assertive in extracting and generating information relevant in solving problems;
- ◆ Develop and Evaluate alternatives objectively so as to arrive at a well-informed and most balanced choice;
- ◆ Be more proactive through effective potential threat management process;
- ◆ Apply logical process in dealing with situations and making common sense more common with self and among members of the organization;
- ◆ Distinguish between Analytical and Creative Thinking;
- ◆ Encourage the application of appropriate technique in coming out with creative and innovative solutions;
- ◆ Identify some of the barriers to creativity and how to overcome them.

### **Target Audience:**

Managerial level - All Managers or those who will be promoted to this position.

### **Methodology**

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