

Problem Analysis and Problem Solving

A structured approach to understanding and solving problems

Course benefits:

The problem with problem solving is the diversity of problems that need to be addressed. Every day, management and staff in an organisation wrestle with one or a number of problem situations. The solutions to these problems can have impacts ranging from hardly noticeable to having significant consequences for the employees and organisation as a whole. Many problems could be solved at a stroke, simply by taking a quick and effective decision, whilst others need careful analysis and rational decision making before solutions can be proposed, let alone implemented.

This course provides a framework for, and teaches, the techniques that we believe are the most successful in problem analysis and problem solving situations.

Who should attend:

This course is suitable for each of:

- Business Managers, Business Staff and Business Analysts who wrestle with business problems
- Systems Analysts and Designers who develop and implement solutions to technical problems
- Any member of a team having a need to participate effectively in problem analysis and problem solving activities

What you will learn:

On successful completion of the course, attendees will be able to:

- analyse, quantify and describe problems in terms of their causes and effects
- identify solutions to these problems and to evaluate these in terms of their consequences to the organisation
- make decisions about which solutions should be implemented

What you will cover:

- Getting Started - recognising that a problem exists; initial problem definition; terms of reference; resources and matching these to the seriousness of the problem faced; what a problem is and what it isn't; basic parameters like problem owner, location and scope of effect
- Understanding the Problem - problem analysis techniques including critical examination, classic work study techniques, cause and effect analysis and observation; quantifying the causes and effects and arriving at an agreed definition of what the problem is and isn't; distinctions and similarities; setting priorities based on the deviation from what is desired; representing the results of analysis in graphical and written form
- Identifying the Solution - agreeing and working within a framework of objectives, musts and wants; scope of the required solution; the use of both logical and creative thinking approaches to identifying solutions; identifying the non-starters and candidates for evaluation
- Evaluating the Solution - agreeing the alternatives and assessing the fit and suitability of each one; solutions that are really a collection of interrelated solutions with important pre and post conditions for overall success; quantifying the benefits and disadvantages of each solution; using decision analysis to arrive at a conclusion; anticipating potential problems and quantifying these in terms of risk, seriousness and visibility; agreeing what and what not to address; refining the solution and agreeing any contingency plans and the way forward from here

How you will learn:

The teaching methods used on this course are geared towards the practicalities of problem solving rather than the theory. Where appropriate, simulations are used, including ones that will put a certain

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amount of pressure on attendees to perform. Related exercises provide a framework on which to practice the techniques as a project, and within a team.

Duration and availability:

Two days non-residential. Public and in-house.