Solving Problems Should be Easy!!!

USING THE 4-STEP VISUAL PROBLEM-SOLVING TOOL

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Four Step Problem Solving

Problem Statement:

Gap Between Target and Actual:

Rank Root Causes in Order of Importance

What
Who
When

Action Plan

Determine Root Causes Before Moving to Step 3!
One Point Lesson

Quadrant 1: Define the Gap

1. Identify your problem statement.
2. Define the gap: compare target and actual.
3. Go to the workplace to verify assumptions and further understand the problem.
4. Be careful not to confuse the problem with causes or countermeasures.
5. Do not jump ahead until the problem is clearly defined.
One Point Lesson Quadrant 2: Identify Root Causes

1. Brainstorm with the team to identify causes of your problem.
2. Ask “why?” five times to drill down to root cause (stop asking when it doesn’t make sense to ask “why” one more time).
3. Collect data and/or go to the workplace to verify causes by observation.
4. Do not jump ahead until root cause(s) are identified.
The 6 Ms

HuMan

Machine

Mother Nature

Material

Measurement

Method
One Point Lesson

Quadrant 3: Root Causes in Order of Importance (Pareto)

1. Determine which causes, in order of importance or impact, are the biggest contributors.
2. Use data and go to the workplace to verify causes.
3. Do not jump ahead until root causes have been ranked.

NOTE: Be sure to focus on causes within control of the group
Other Methods to Narrow Choices

Priority / Payoff Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payoff/ Benefit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Ease of Implementation

Concern

Influence

Control
1. Brainstorm possible countermeasures for each root cause with the team.
2. Choose viable options to implement and test.
3. Identify implementation timelines and responsibilities.
4. MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS! If the problem is not resolved, try other countermeasures or begin the problem solving cycle again.
Example: Four Step Problem Solving

Problem Statement:
During the morning shift at our restaurant, the toast is burnt 50% of the time.

Target: Toast
Golden Brown
100% of the time

Actual: Toast
Golden Brown 50% of the time

Gap Between Target and Actual:
50% Burnt Toast

Rank Root Causes in Order of Importance
- Different processes for timing
- Pop up mechanism broken
- White vs wheat have different times

Step 1
Step 3
Step 2
Step 4

Determine Root Causes Before Moving to Step 3!

Gap Between Target and Actual:
50% Burnt Toast

Action Plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create visual aid for timing</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>1/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train staff on visual aid</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>1/26-1/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get toaster fixed</td>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>1/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicate one toaster for white/one for wheat</td>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>1/25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: Four Step Problem Solving
Thank You!

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