

2 – DAY

PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING

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INTRODUCTION

“A positive attitude may not solve every problem but it makes solving any problem a more pleasant experience.”

- Grant Fairley –

Solving problems are at the centre of what many people do at work every day. Whether you are solving a problem for a client (internal or external), supporting those who are solving problems, or discovering new problems to solve, the problems you face can be large or small, simple or complex, and easy or difficult. Hence, psychologists and business people alike have discovered that successful problem solvers tend to use the same type of process to identify and implement the solutions to their problems. This process works for any kind of problem, large or small.

This Problem Solving and Decision-Making program will provide you the skills to evaluate, identify, and distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information, an overview of the entire problem-solving process, as well as key problem-solving tools that they can use every day. This will lead you to be more professional in your career, and provide an added advantage in your everyday life.

METHODOLOGY

Theories and models will be simplified and further enriched with activities to engage them mentally and physically. To evaluate their knowledge and how they can apply what they have learnt into their workplace after the program, we will conduct a post-test, review and recap, and an action plan. Facilitator incorporates methods in NLP to create an environment where participants will be fully engaged on both conscious and subconscious level. Training will be delivered in a highly interactive and experiential way whereby concepts and background information will be presented through group exercises, discussion and activities creating an environment that facilitates accelerated learning and application. Each activity will be thoroughly de-briefed to link the learning to application. Additionally, participants will document their learning points and noteworthy thoughts in a workbook after every module. The workbook also contains useful explanations, tips, and methods. Other methods employed include short explanations with slides and Q&A, role-playing, demonstrations, group discussions, and video clip presentations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand problems and the creative problem-solving process.
- Identify types of information to gather and key questions to ask in problem solving.
- Identify the importance of defining a problem correctly.
- Use basic brainstorming tools to generate ideas for solutions.
- Evaluate potential solutions against criteria, including cost/benefit analysis and group voting.
- Perform a final analysis to select a solution.
- Understand the roles that fact and intuition play in selecting a solution.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Executives
- Supervisors

PROGRAM OUTLINES

MODULE 1: PROBLEM SOLVING (STEP 1 – PROBLEM DEFINITION)

Regardless of our vocation or profession, we are presented daily with a host of decisions and problems to solve. In this module, we will learn some steps for problem solving. Some psychologists define a problem as a gap or barrier between where an individual is and where they wish to be. In other words, a problem is the space between point A and B. Problems then essentially consist of the initial state and a goal state. All possible solution paths leading to the goal state are located in the problem space.

- Self-Assessment: How Good Are You at Solving Problems?
- Storytime – King and His Dessert
- Defining the Problem and Determining Where the Problem Originated
- Defining the Present State and the Desired State
- Video Clip: Apollo 13
- Stating and Restating the Problem
- Analysing the Problem and Writing the Problem Statement

MODULE 2: PROBLEM SOLVING (STEP 2 – GENERATING SOLUTIONS)

Generating possibilities for solutions to the defined problem comes next in the process. It is important to generate as many solutions as possible before analysing the solutions or trying to implement them. There are many different methods for generating solutions. This module begins with some ground rules for brainstorming sessions. Then it presents several idea-generating techniques, including free-association style brainstorming, brainwriting, mind mapping and Duncker Diagrams.

- Identifying and Removing Mental Blocks
- Group-Think Competition: Lateral Thinking
- Nature's Invention
- Video Clip: The Bridge Riddle
- The 5 Habits to Induce Creative Thinking
- Group Activities: Associating, Networking, Experimenting, Observing and Questioning
- Brainstorming Basics
- Group Activities: Brainwriting, Mind Mapping, Duncker Diagrams and The Morphological Matrix

MODULE 3: DECISION MAKING (STEP 1 – ANALYSING SOLUTIONS)

With many different solutions in hand, the problem solvers need to analyse those solutions to determine the effectiveness of each one. This module helps you consider the criteria or goals for solving the problem, as well as distinguishing between wants and needs. This module also introduces the cost/benefit analysis as a method of analysing solutions.

- Developing Criteria
- Analysing Wants and Needs
- Using Cost/ Benefit Analysis

MODULE 4: DECISION MAKING (STEP 2 – SELECTING A SOLUTION)

The next step in the process is to select one or more solutions from the possibilities. In the previous step, you will have eliminated many of the possibilities. With a short list of possibilities, you can do a final analysis to come up with one or more of the best solutions to the problem. This module discusses that final analysis, as well as a tool for selecting a solution called Paired Comparison Analysis. It also discusses analysing potential problems that may arise with a selected solution.

- Storytime: The Elderly Couple and Their Donkey
- Doing a Final Analysis
- Group Activity: Paired Comparison Analysis
- Analysing Potential Problems
- Group Activity: Kinabatangan River Maiden

MODULE 5: WRAPPING UP

What is all worthwhile? In this module, we will assess certain knowledge and understanding gained throughout the program. Also, participants will come up with an action plan to **apply** what they have learnt in their professional lives.

- Learning Points and Key Takeaways
- Post-Test
- Commitment Pledge, Action Plan and Evaluations