

The Finding Solutions Course Part 1

“Identifying the Real Problem”

Overview

Every organization seems to have their share of problems in today’s world where information is so easily exchanged, yet it also becomes so quickly outdated. Problems arise in a variety of areas from personnel to production and sometimes just from peoples perceptions. Anyone in media relations will tell you that it doesn’t matter if there is a real factual problem in your organization or not, if your employees, clients or the public perceive there is one, then you have a problem.

It is estimated that what many people would call “simple problems” actually cost organizations in North America hundreds of millions of dollars in lost sales, reduced productivity, poor employee relations, law suits and bad media relations. Even non profit organizations and public sector agencies such as schools, local and federal governments, police and fire departments, hospitals and other social service agencies all lose their effectiveness when their problems go unsolved.

A common flaw in finding workable solutions to problems is rushing into a problem solving process without spending enough resources and time on problem identification and analysis. Often what many of us see as a problem is actually only a symptom of a problem. The best problem solving process in the world will never solve your problems if all you ever work on is the symptoms of your problems and never get to the problems root cause.

This course is the first half of the Finding Solutions Course and it is designed to train your staff in two very crucial essential skill areas:

- 1. The Research and Identification of the real problems.**
- 2. The analysis of your problems including how to make decisions regarding a future solution process.**

While not every possible problem situation is foreseeable there are universal methods of properly researching and distilling down information into a final non divisible factor, the root case of your problem. Until this is done, all you will ever be treating is symptoms and your problems will continue in one form or another.

The Finding Solutions Course was developed from 15 years of teaching the Problem Solving and Brain Storming courses at the Atlantic Police Academy to police officers and supervisors who had to solve problems in the complex system of Community Based Policing (CBP). Because problem solving in CBP involves the public, businesses, labor unions, nonprofit and social services agencies and the media it takes into account many of the aspects found in any organization with problems.

Your seminar leader is Inspector Reginald Dane Berringer BA, MEd CD, who has been training officers for 15 years in problem identification, problem analysis and finding solutions through innovative brainstorming methods. Insp. Berringer was also trained as a police media relations officer in Ottawa at the RCMP CPC and is considered an expert on how people perceptions can become an problems for organizations.

Course Fee and Requirements

This first course is offered for a flat fee which includes a “Finding Solutions; identifying the real problem” Student Text for each participant. Due to the active nature of this course the suggested class size is 25 or less. Please contact us if you require a larger group trained. Also included is a post course follow up conducted at 3, 6 and 12 months after the course is completed to evaluate the effect of our course and to answer any questions that may have arisen since the course was completed.

Once you have booked this course you will be mailed a problem analysis survey regarding your organization so that your course can be customized to your organizations circumstances.

All our courses follow the “10% Solution” mandate which means that 10% of the seminar fee will be donated to a non profit charity of your choice.

Course Duration:	1 Day.
Methods of Delivery	1 Full Day Session 2 Half Day Sessions
Text Supplied:	Finding Solutions, identifying the real problem
Prerequisite to:	Finding Solutions Part 2 Advanced Problem Solving Strategies & Methods

Problem Solving Course Level 1

“Identifying the Real Problem”

Course Outline

Problem Identification

Starting Your Process from Common Ground

The Definition of “A Problem”
“What Is” and “What Should Be”
Conditions in an Organization or Group
When “Perception is the Problem”

The Definition of a “Symptom of a Problem”
Examples
Class exercise

The Definition of “The Root Cause of a Problem”
Class Exercise

Determining Ownership of the Problem
Ownership versus duty to support solution

Determining the Real Problem

Research Methods Overview
Hard data collection methods
Soft data collection methods

Separating Problems from Symptoms
The town that solved their problems
Case Studies

Occupationally Specific Class Exercise
Problem solving teams
Solution debriefing
The Iceberg Rules (80/20)
The Life Boat effect
Seeing the real problem

Problem Analysis

Tools for Understanding Problems

Sequential Analysis

- Danger of the Devils Advocate**
- The baby and the bathwater**
- Holistic Analysis**
- Using “but whys?”**

Symptoms versus Problems

Answering the 5 W’s and How about a problem

The Triad of Problem Causality

- The environmental factors required**
- Those who are adversely affected**
- The problem or perception of a problem**

Deciding the Direction for the Solution Process

Problem impact analysis

- Frequency and range of the problem**
- Who is affected**
- Effects on other problems or issues**

Solvability issues

- Systemic and situational problems**
- Complexity of problem**
- Potential resources required to solve**
- Problem Ownership**

Decision points

- Impact if problem left alone**
- Public concern or perception issues**
- Stakeholder issues**
- Agency priorities regarding problem**

Overview of problem solving models

- PARE , SARA, CAPRA others....**
- Importance of proper brainstorming**

Three , six and twelve Month Follow Up Contact and Evaluation