PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

Root Cause Analysis

US 242817 / NQF Level 4 / Non-Credit Bearing

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."
– Albert Einstein

One of the biggest mistakes in problem-solving is jumping to solutions before fully understanding the problem. How often do we make decisions based on assumptions rather than facts? Effective problem-solving is about applying structured thinking to uncover root causes, explore creative solutions, and make informed decisions that drive real results.

This practical course equips you with the skills and structured techniques to tackle challenges with confidence, think critically, and make better decisions. Instead of reacting to problems with guesswork or assumptions, you will learn to analyse issues effectively, generate innovative solutions, and implement decisions that drive real results. The ability to solve problems strategically not only improves performance but also builds confidence, fosters collaboration, and creates a culture of continuous improvement - helping both you and your organisation to thrive.

Whether you're tackling business challenges, improving processes, or making strategic decisions, this course equips you with proven techniques to think critically and act decisively.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Managers, supervisors and business owners responsible for making key decisions
- Team members involved in identifying problems and driving improvements
- Anyone looking to enhance their problem-solving and critical thinking skills

HOW YOU WILL BENEFIT

- Develop a structured approach to solving problems and making decisions
- Gain confidence in analysing complex issues and identifying root causes
- Encourage creative thinking and innovation within your team
- Improve collaboration by fostering a problem-solving culture
- Learn proven techniques to evaluate solutions and make informed choices
- Embrace change and continuous improvement by challenging the status quo

Two-day course 08:30 -16:00
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WHAT WILL BE COVERED

Defining the problem

- Combine critical and creative thinking
- Use verified information to define a clear, accurate problem statement
- Engage key stakeholders and role-players for a comprehensive, shared understanding
- Apply structured techniques and thinking models such as the 5W+H and Ask 5 Whys
- Explore visual tools such as flowcharts and fishbone diagrams to define the problem

Investigating the problem

- Break the problem down using methods like the 4W+H and 6 Universal Questions
- Use techniques such as Senses Questioning and Fact-Finding to uncover deeper details
- Apply tools like SWOT and Force Field Analysis to obtain and examine information
- Critically evaluate information for relevance, reliability and bias

Generating and evaluating solutions

- Harness group creativity with brainstorming, nominal group technique and questionnaires
- Use De Bono's Six Thinking Hats to broaden perspectives and reduce blind spots
- Employ analytical tools like affinity diagrams, mapping and Pareto Charts
- Identify success criteria and apply the Weighted-decision model to prioritise
- Use Force Field Analysis and ranking systems to evaluate solution viability
- Avoid common decision-making pitfalls

Implementing the solution

- Select the optimum solution(s) based on data, feasibility and alignment
- Build stakeholder commitment through clear communication and inclusive consultation
- Plan, prepare and execute with structured implementation frameworks
- Select, brief, train and support teams to ensure smooth rollout
- Monitor progress using defined criteria and tracking mechanisms
- Conduct outcome reviews to assess effectiveness, sustainability and satisfaction

Evaluating the effectiveness of the solution

- Establish clear, measurable success criteria aligned to the original problem
- Apply monitoring and evaluation tools to track the effectiveness of the solution
- Determine whether the problem has been fully resolved - or if further action is needed
- Use feedback and results to refine future decision-making processes