

Course 158: Creative Problem Solving (2 days)

Course Description...

A problem is a difference between things as desired and things as perceived. This course describes time-proven techniques and processes for identifying and defining problems and producing creative solutions to those problems. The two-day program includes workshops in which students actively define and solve problems that typically occur in business, management and in general. Course workshops are built from actual problems within the organization.

Learning Objectives...

- Discover how to identify the real problem
- Introduce a structured approach for solving problems and making decisions
- Review various approaches to solving problems in a group setting
- Use several of the problem-solving techniques in class workshops to gain an understanding of the mechanics of solving problems

Who should attend...

Project managers, business managers, customer service representatives, help desk technicians, and anyone who has problem solving decisions to be made.

Prerequisites...

There are no prerequisites for this course.

See next page for a detailed course outline...



Course Outline...

Unit 1: The Basics

- Using the brains
- Whole-brain thinking
- What is critical thinking?
- The creative process
- Decision making

Unit 2: The Problem of Problems

- What are problems?
 - Has more than one solution
 - Is diverting attention
- Problem versus decision
 - Problem requires decisions
 - Decision is the problem
- Problem solving is a natural process
- Framing the context
- Spend 80% of the time on the solution and 20% on the problem
- Most important question: why is this a problem?

Unit 3: Creating a Creative Environment

- What is necessary
- Communication for creativity
- Overcoming obstacles

Unit 4: Structured Problem-Solving Approaches

- Gather information
 - Determine who is affected by the problem
 - Who needs problem solved
 - Who cares how it is solved
 - Who has authority to solve it
 - Gather information from all parties
 - Try to answer question: why is this a problem
- Brainstorming
 - Group or individual process
 - Iterative approach
 - Rules of brainstorming
- Filtering process
 - Written list of problem candidates
 - Determine Problem candidates that are out of scope
 - Determine the problem owner for each candidate
 - Determine relevancy of each problem candidate
 - Distinguish between problems and requirements
 - Distinguish between problems and symptoms



- Writing it down
 - Mind maps
 - The binary approach
 - The algorithmic approach
- Modeling the problem

Unit 5: Group Problem Solving

- Problem-solving meetings
 - Defining criteria
 - Maximizing the brains
 - Prompts
- Group-think
 - Overcoming analysis-paralysis
 - Focusing on the ends
- Analysis models
 - Situation assessment
 - Problem evaluation
- The iterative mind

Unit 6: Decision Making

- Decision making techniques
 - Wideband Delphi technique
 - Binary approach
 - Flip the coin
- Obstacle to decision making
 - Personal resistance
 - Organizational politics
- Selling the decision
 - Forming coalitions
 - Upward management

Unit 7: Applying the Techniques

- Everyday business problems
- Everyday business solutions
- What to do next?

Best Practices

Please contact your ROI representative to discuss course tailoring!!!