

Problem Analysis Questionnaire

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| 1 | <p>Explore the problem: gap between current reality and desired state</p> <p>Describe the problem What is the problem? Who says there's a problem?</p> <p>When did it start? What are the symptoms, and where are they seen?</p> <p>Describe your objectives What do you want? Why do you want it? What would that get you?</p> <p>What are the major issues to be decided?</p> |
| 2 | <p>Identify stakeholders</p> <p>Who is the decision maker?</p> <p>Who may be affected by the problem?</p> <p>When considering alternatives, who... ...will be affected? ...must be involved in implementing? ...would be able to stop implementation?</p> |
| 3 | <p>Identify constraints</p> <p>What are the constraints? (time, money, resources...)</p> <p>What criteria must potential solutions meet?</p> <p>What must be preserved with any solution?</p> |
| 4 | <p>Define problem environment (uncontrolled variables)</p> <p>What is the problem environment?</p> <p>What changes have occurred recently? (Why is this a problem now?)</p> <p>What seem to be the major causal factors in this situation?</p> <p>What are likely side effects of the new situation?</p> |
| 5 | <p>Explore options: alternative solutions (controllable variables)</p> <p>How could we get there?</p> <p>What are some more options?</p> <p>What are the pros and cons of each option?</p> |

Some general tips:

- Notice all of the open questions here (who, what, when, where, why, how). It is important to keep an open mind and questioning attitude throughout the problem-solving process.
- For complex problems, there will probably be different areas of focus at different times, and iteration between these sets of questions.
- Be sure to question constraints, and seek creative solutions to "cons".