

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Career Development

In the past few decades, 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.

The **Creative Problem Solving** workshop will give participants an overview of the entire creative problem solving process, as well as key problem solving tools that they can use every day. Skills such as brainstorming, information gathering, analyzing data, and identifying resources will be covered throughout the workshop.



WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- ✓ 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
- ✓ Identify and use four different problem definition tools
- ✓ Write concrete problem statements
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Understand the need to refine the shortlist and redefine it
- ✓ Understand how to identify the tasks and resources necessary to implement solutions
- ✓ Evaluate and adapt solutions to reality



PRE-ASSIGNMENT

- Think of a problem that you need to solve. It could be professional related: a work problem or challenge, or a personal problem such as your teenager that stays out too late. Capture basic information about your problem.



PROBLEM DEFINITION ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

- Who do you ask about this problem? What questions do you ask to find out where this problem came from?
- Create a present state statement and a desired state statement. Refine the statements until the desired state statement clearly addresses the needs or issues identified in the present state statement.
- Now start with a general statement of the problem and refine it until you reach a concrete problem statement.
- Analyze the problem by identifying what the problem is and is not. Use What, When, Where, and Extent method to the final problem statement.



DEVELOPING CRITERIA ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

- What is the timing of the problem?
- What should be considered for the trend of the problem?
- How serious is the problem?
- Make a list of criteria the [_____] might consider for evaluating solutions.