

PHASE III – MODULE 7: PROBLEM SOLVING

PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHEETS

We have designed these worksheets to help you lead or participate in a problem-solving initiative. Follow the steps below and answer the questions to work through the problem-solving process

DEFINE THE PROBLEM

- 1. Write your problem statement in clear and concise terms.**

- 2. Describe the “desired state” – the outcome you hope to reach by solving the problem.**

ANALYZE THE CAUSES

- 1. Identify potential causes.**

- 2. Identify the most likely causes.**

3. Identify the root causes.

4. Reanalyze the most likely causes by asking “why” several times.

IDENTIFY POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. Generate a list of possible solutions.

2. Determine the best solutions from the brainstormed list. Do this by multi-voting. Write all the possible solutions on a flipchart and then give each member of your group 5 votes to distribute among the list of ideas that were generated. Members should vote by placing a check mark by the ideas they think are the best possible solutions. When all members are done voting, tally the number of checks next to each idea. Write down your top 4-6 possible solutions.

i.

ii.

iii.

iv.

v.

vi.

CHOOSE A SOLUTION

1. Develop an assign weights to criteria.

- a. Determine which criteria (3-6) are most important for selecting a solution to the problem. Make sure that you clearly define each criterion so that everyone has the same definition in mind. Applying the weightings to each criterion show how important they are, relative to each other. This can be done by assigning a number to each criterion so all the criteria together total 100.

i.

ii.

iii.

iv.

v.

vi.

2. Select the best solution.

- a. Apply the criteria to each of the 4-6 possible solutions your group identified earlier. When you are done, multiply the scores for each solution by the weight that you assigned for each criterion.

- b. Choose the best solution.

DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

1. Divide the solution into sequential tasks.

- a.** What tasks or activities need to be carried out to implement the solution? Who will be responsible for each and what are the target dates to have their tasks completed?

2. Develop a backup plan.

- a.** What strategies will you use as a backup plan?

IMPLEMENT SOLUTION(S) AND EVALUATE PROGRESS

Collect data according to the Action Plan. It is important that you have a process in place for monitoring the plan. This could include weekly reports from key members or officers, or meetings with key people on a regular basis.

- 1. What data will you collect to ensure that the action steps have been completed? How will you collect the data?**
- 2. As things change during the implementation of the plan, you need to be ready to adjust. What is your approach for implementing the backup plan?**
- 3. Evaluate the results of your solution. How have things gone? Are there plans in place to ensure the problem does not occur again?**