

Team Problem Solving

The Technique

Impact Analysis

What is it?

Impact Analysis is a tool that can be used to help with Problem Definition. It is an effective way for a team to begin thinking about a problem. It is worth spending time making sure the team has clearly defined the problem before starting an improvement project or even before implementing minor changes to a process.

When to Use it

When a team first meets to tackle a problem it can be difficult to know where or how to start. Impact Analysis is an easy way to get started.

What you need

Flip Chart Paper for recording

How to Work with it

1. What is the current situation?
 - Brainstorm and discuss until the team has a clear idea and detailed description of the problem

2. What is the impact of the current situation?
 - How is this problem hurting us? (the organisation, customers and other stakeholders)
 - Brainstorm and discuss this question until the team is satisfied they have a full and clear understanding of the impact of the problem.

3. What is the ideal situation?
 - If there were no constraints, what ideally would we like to happen?
 - Brainstorm and discuss to define the ideal outcome.
 - This process provides the team with goals and measures of success. They can then compare their results against these once they have implemented their solutions.

4. What would be the impact of the ideal situation?
 - What would the consequences be (on the organisation, internal and external customers) if we were to implement our solutions?
 - This process tests solutions to identify and prevent the team from creating any further problems