

Innovative Problem Solving & Decision Making For Senior & Middle Management

PeterJoubert Associates

Thinking skills for executives and managers
A customised training programme for senior executives

OBJECTIVES

Problem solving is the art of finding ways to get from where you are to where you want to be. The problem, therefore is the gap between the present situation and a more desirable one. Problem solving includes the creation and exploitation of opportunities, as well as overcoming the operational problems and unsatisfactory situations you face on a day to day basis.

Most of the previous generation problem solving courses are based on the assumption that we need to identify root causes of problems and then take remedial action to restore the status quo. A linear thought process is applied to fix problems and to make "rational" choices. Today we know that this approach is not going to be effective in all instances.

We need a process of problem solving and making choices suitable for a world of change. New thinking skills and patterns must be adopted to enable thinking "out of the box" and understanding systems thinking. In other words problem solvers must have an appreciation of the possible impact of their actions on the organisation as a whole and must "see" the bigger picture.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

This course will enable learners to acquire an effective way of thinking and problem solving. Good decision making will ensure better future results and the solving of problems causing faulty products and sub standard services.

After the workshop you will be able to perform:

- An integrated problem solving process, opportunity development and goal achievement
- Define and analyse problems
- Mastering the techniques of diagnostics and cause identification
- Innovative decision making utilising appropriate creative techniques
- Evaluation of solutions and making a good choice
- Assessing risks and developing preventative and contingent actions
- Utilising and developing lateral ways of thinking
- Ensuring successful implementation of decisions and solutions through the proper selling of the solution, action planning, and control

Centurion
South Africa



Phone: 0027 834172907

Fax: 0027 126547546

E-mail: peter@peterjoubert.com

www.peterjoubert.com

**"The significant problems we face
cannot be solved at the same level
of thinking we were at when we
created them"**
Albert Einstein

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to help participants excel in many areas of their own problem solving. The action steps in this course are simple and practical – yet the cumulative effect can be radical. It offers a unique interactive and hands-on learning experience that provides easy comprehension of problem solving and decision making issues for all staff and executives. It also promotes team spirit and reinvigorates participants' individual contribution to the company.

This workshop will enable you to appraise and resolve any difficult management or technical situation. You will have a very good decision support system.

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Appraise and analyse a situation
- Use a decision support system
- Perform problem identification
 - Collect the relevant problem data
 - Perform prioritising
- Define a problem
- Perform problem analysis using various techniques e.g. "Is is-not matrix", Cause & effect fish bone charts, Force field analysis
 - Analyse human performance
- Making a decision
 - The process of making a good decision
 - Implement the decision
 - Selling the decision to stakeholders
- Perform risk management
 - Risk identification
 - Taking preventative actions
 - Taking contingent and containment actions
- Action planning
 - Plan for the implementation of the decision support system in your organisation

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Senior and Middle Management as well as participants from any discipline, whose organisational role require them to problem solve on their own or with team members.

ACHIEVE DELIVERABLES THROUGH

- Lectures
- Group sessions
- Practical exercises
- In-class debate

MODULE BENEFITS

A highly qualified facilitator ensures that all learning content is communicated by using proven methods. The training program will meet the learning needs because of the synergy between individuals, the group and facilitator.

As the training will be in a relaxed non-threatening manner, each participant can adjust and warm to the learning atmosphere in their own way. Experiential learning methods will be encouraged where the participants work situations will be brought into the training wherever applicable with the solving of real in house problems with the trainers assistance.

Training needs analysis & post training effectiveness assessment

To ensure that participants gain maximum benefits from the course, detailed questionnaires will be sent to all course participants to establish exactly where their training needs lie.

The completed forms will be analysed to ensure training at the right level and addressing relevant issues.

The second Questionnaire is a Post Training Effectiveness Assessment to determine the effectiveness of the course and follow up training needs of participants.

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THREE DAY TRAINING PROGRAMME OUTLINE:

DAY ONE

Session one

- Introduction and Aligning Expectations :
- Creative thinking skills and effective problem solving
- Expectations of delegates

Session Two

- What is a decision support system?
- Problem solving in context
- The decision support system process

Session Three

- How to identify problems using a problem identification table
- The proper collection of data
- How to prioritise problems

Session Four

- The problem analysis process
- Using a problem analysis framework
- How to construct the "Is-is not " matrix basic method
- How to develop possible causes of a problem
- How to do testing to find the most probable cause
- Application on own problems

DAY TWO

Session One

- The "Is - Is not " advanced technique
- Application on case study
- Application on own problems

Session Two

- Cause & effect Fishbone charts
- Force field analysis
- Application on own problems

Session Three

- Analysing human performance - understanding the performance system
- How to use the performance system checklist application on own problems

DAY THREE

Session One

- Decision making in context
- The process of making a good decision explained
- Application on case study

Session Two

- Application on own situation
- Implementation of a decision

Session Three

- How to sell a decision
- How to appraise a decision or proposal from a third party

Session Four

- The importance of risk management
- Processes to manage risks explained
- How to take preventative and contingent actions
- Application on own situation

Session Five

- Application planning by delegates to ensure the implementation of the required processes and techniques in their work environment

METHODOLOGY

The problem solving and decision making processes and techniques will be mastered by means of hands on applications derived from case studies and practical work assignments. Supportive instruments, templates and tools covering all the processes are provided.

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ABOUT YOUR FACILITATOR

Piet Joubert is a seasoned consultant with over 25 years experience of Project Management, Problem Solving & Decision Making and Team Building.

Piet is a highly experienced facilitator and a management & business development specialist. He is a seasoned project manager playing various roles in projects over the past 14 years.

He uses a structured approach with proven processes to execute assignments. He has a good understanding of business in a variety of industries, and is equally at home on board level assignments and dealing with people at the grass roots level.

Areas of specialisation:

- Strategy development
 - Corporate
 - Business
 - Sales & Marketing
- Project Management – Defining structuring, planning and execution of projects
- Business Process Mapping & Analysis, utilising applicable CASE tools where necessary
- Problem solving (technical & people)
- Decision making

Qualifications and Accreditations

- BA University of Pretoria
- BA (Hons) University of Port Elizabeth
- Certificate in Business Management, RAU University (Johannesburg)

Professional Experience

- Management Consultant, performing business/management consulting, project assignments and training
- Business Development Manager – SAFTO (South African Foreign Trade Organisation). Initiated new projects and services for the company
- Management consultant at Sep Serfontein Associates & Kepner Tregoe South Africa. Main contribution in organisation development and workshop presentation viz problem solving, project management & team building

Professional Experience continued

- Training Manager at Shatterprufe Safety Glass. Responsible for the corporate training function providing a service to four plants
- Head of Industrial Relations at Richards Bay Minerals (new venture)
Established the department from inception. IR structures and systems.
Building and purchasing of houses to accommodate temporary and permanent staff.

Relevant Clients

Piet has led successful training sessions and workshops along with a successful track record. He conducted assignments in South Africa, the Sultanate of Oman, Ethiopia and Kuwait.

Problem Solving and Decision Making Experience

He was originally trained in the well known process of Kepner-Tregoe as training manager for Pilkington-Shatterprufe Glass and contributed to generate huge cost savings by proper problem solving and decision making. He later worked for Kepner-Tregoe South Africa as a consultant. He presented workshops in problem solving across many industries in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi. The emphasis was on solving technical and process problems.

Some clients included:

- Petrochemicals (Sasol, Petro-SA)
- Paper & pulp factories, Mondi Merebank
- Motor industry, Volkswagen of SA & Nissan
- Eskom – power stations – coal
- Oman Cables Industry
- Richards Bay Coal Terminal.
- AST – Mentoring
- Standard Bank of South Africa – Problem Solving
- ABSA Bank South Africa
- First National Bank of South Africa
- Wesbank South Africa
- Aslaa Kuwait
- Oman Cables Industry

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