

GUIDESHEET

PROBED COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING (COLLEAGUE)

The vast majority of organisational problems cannot be resolved by the traditional experts-in-silos approach. We need a shared method to enable people to work as one team across the boundaries to tackle problems. The PROBED Tool is that method.

The simple, yet powerful PROBED framework uses the three natural steps in any problem solving process to provide a method and language for problem solving that anyone can use.

The format below is designed for use by a small group of colleagues.

DEFINE THAT PROBLEM

PROBLEM

Help your colleague to briefly state the problem (allowing no more than 5 minutes initially):

- What is the core problem that you would like to work through?
- Is this one problem, or do we need to break it up?

REALITY

Help them get to the heart of the matter by brainstorming a list of all the past, present and future realities (causes, effects and related issues):

- What are the key effects of this problem?
- What caused this problem?
- What strengths and weaknesses will affect how you handle this?

Now...

- Sort into categories
- Revisit the Problem Statement and rewrite it as a SMARTA goal - (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timed, agreed)

HIT IT WITH CREATIVITY

OPTIONS

Challenge your colleague to generate conventional, bold and wild ideas targeted at each of the potential causes (and at mitigating the effects):

- What is the obvious option?
- What are your best ideas?
- What are some 'left field' ideas?
- What assumptions are holding you back?

BEST OPTION

Decide the criteria or tests that you will need to sort your options:

- What criteria must your best option(s) meet (e.g. impact, time, cost etc)?
- Can you combine options or make them stronger?
- Is there more work needed on creative options?

Now...

- Select the best option or options to test or implement.

MAKE IT GO AWAY

EXECUTION

Focus your colleague on defining an execution plan, including timing, resources and support:

- For each step let's define the what, who and when
- How will you get the resources and support you need?
- What else needs to go into the plan?

DO NEXT

Get them to commit to immediate actions:

- What are your first steps?
- When will you move forward?

Now...

- Do a quick action debrief to capture lessons learned
- Agree a time in the future to do a further debrief to check progress.