

# PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

A 3-DAY INTENSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE DURING WHICH YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO USE THE FOLLOWING KT CLEAR THINKING PROCESSES.

**Situation Appraisal:** *break down any situation into specific components, and determine who will do what, and by when.*

- Create a clear and complete list of all the issues related to a particular situation
- Use three key criteria to put the list in priority order, so action can be taken on the right thing at the right time
- Plan appropriate action for each concern and assign involvement to ensure the best outcome
- Communicate priorities and ownership easily

**Problem Analysis:** *a structured way to quickly find the cause when things are not working as they should.*

- Define problem scope through setting up a simple, clear problem statement and then use four key categories of information to precisely describe the problem
- Identify the problem using Kepner-Tregoe's unique approach of comparing items that do not have the problem to those that do, use clues to identify specific changes that caused the problem
- Create and test hypotheses about possible causes to eliminate ones that don't support known facts
- Confirm the true cause before taking action to fix it

**Decision Analysis:** *understand how needed benefits will influence your choice, see how well various options meet your needs, and ensure that your choice can stand the test of time.*

- Identify scope and gain consensus by focusing on identifying objectives, then choices, and finally on risks before committing to a final choice.
- Identify criteria that will be used to evaluate choices, including clear measures of success
- Understand which criteria are mandatory and which are not, and how much influence non-mandatory criteria will have
- Use simple-but-robust techniques for comparing performance of alternatives
- Consider risks associated with alternatives

**Potential Problem Analysis:** *consider what might go wrong with future actions, identify ways to keep bad things from happening, and/or minimize damage.*

- Brainstorm a list of things that could impact the success of a plan or action
- Put the list in priority order so action can be taken on the right thing at the right time
- Identify and prevent possible causes for each potential problem
- Prepare actions to minimize effects if problems happen along with triggers to ensure those actions happen only when needed
- Learn **Potential Opportunity Analysis:** a similar process for identifying and leveraging *future* opportunities

**Additional topics:** *covered if time and learner interest are available.*

- Questioning Skills
- Advanced topics for each process (e.g. for Problem Analysis: Think Beyond the Fix; Using PA for Specific Types of Problems; etc.)