

## **Business Problem Solving and Strategic Decision Making (2 Day)**

This Business Problem Solving and Strategic Decision Making training class first examines the five steps in the problem-solving process and delves into what the learner should know to solve any problem that he or she may encounter. Students will examine the various methods for defining the problem and will learn how to generate a solution, as well as come up with alternative solutions. They will look at how to implement their chosen solution, and then how to analyze that solution to determine if it is indeed the right one, as well as gather any lessons learned to apply to future problems.

Students will also learn how an organization can benefit from employing strategic decision-making techniques, and how to use decision-making strategies to improve negotiation skills.

### **Course Topics**

- Learn how to define the problem at hand.
- Examine tools for generating possible solutions to the problem.
- Explore how to evaluate and select possible alternative solutions.
- Determine how to effectively implement the solution you have chosen.
- Evaluate that solution for effectiveness.
- Learn the fundamentals of strategic decision making.
- Learn to plan, frame, and research decisions.
- Learn to develop numerous high-quality options and select the best one.
- Learn to use decision-making strategies to improve negotiation skills.
- Learn to overcome decision making barriers.

### **Course Outline**

#### **Defining the Problem**

Why This Is an Important First Step

Tools for Defining the Problem

Root-Cause Analysis

Diagramming

The Six Ws

CATWOE

### **Generating Possible Solutions**

- Use a Mind Map
- Brainstorming Techniques
  - Freewriting
  - Word Association
  - Listing
- Shift Your Perspective
- Challenge Assumptions: Restate the Issue

### **Evaluating and Selecting Alternatives**

- Determine the Most Workable and Reasonable Solution
  - What Is the Best Solution?
- Occam's Razor: Why the Simplest Solution Is Usually the Best
  - Occam's Razor Example

### **Implementing Your Solution**

- Gain Acceptance from Stakeholders
  - Who Are Your Stakeholders?
  - How to Get Buy-in
  - Identify Your Message
  - Compose a Clear and Concise Message
  - Identify Action Steps and a Communication Plan
- Define Resources Needed to Implement the Solution
- Implement a Contingency Plan
  - What Could Go Wrong?

### **Evaluating Your Solution**

- Follow Up to Ensure that the Problem Is Solved
  - Customer Surveys
  - Group or Individual Meetings
  - Checkpoints
  - The Importance of Flexibility
- Determine Lessons Learned, to Avoid Future Problems
  - Try to Determine the Problem's Cause
  - What Could You Have Done Differently?
  - Was It the Best Solution?
  - Record Lessons Learned and Share
- Suggest Improvements to the Solution
  - Celebrate Achievements

**Preparing to Make Decisions**

- Fundamentals of Decision Making
- Defining Decisions
- Decision Frames
- Researching Decisions

**Decision Options**

- Generating Options
- Selecting an Option

**Decision Results**

- Results of Your Decisions
- Learning from the experience of Others

**Complex Decisions**

- Decision Scenarios
- Linked Decisions

**Group Decisions**

- Making Group Decisions
- Overcoming Decision Making Barriers

**Negotiation Decisions**

- Making Negotiation Decisions
- Decision Making Pitfalls for Negotiators