

What is the Difference between Good & Not-So-Good Problem-Solving?

You can profile your problem solving by checking those items which mostly closely match your organization's approach to problem solving ...

GOOD PROBLEM SOLVING

- Pay attention to early “signals”.
 - The longer it is ignored the more difficult it is to find the root cause(s).
- Look at the process(es), which produce the results.
- Time Series Analysis
 - When did the problem start?
 - Is chronic or sporadic?
- Use of “Why5”, Cause & Effect or Tree Diagrams.
 - Peeling the onion as to the real root cause.
- Involve suppliers early, where appropriate.
- Work closely with external/internal customers.
- Produce evidence that test/evaluation system is accurate and/or in control.
- Involve a committed third party peer to increase objectivity.
- Stand back & do an *integrated* analysis of individual analyses – get the BIG PICTURE
- Assure necessary technical & operational knowledge is available.

Not-So-GOOD PROBLEM SOLVING

- Not take signals seriously, especially repetitive ones.
- Fail to remember the outcome is produced by the process that precedes it!
- Do not “act by fact”.
- Treat the symptom or use a disorganized approach to assessing potential root causes.
- Ignore the supplier's role in achieving operational excellence and their ability to contribute to the solution.
- Fail to listen to the “voice of the customer”.
- Act on erroneous data/information.
- Let bias get in the way.
- Rush to judgment without seeing if the pieces fit together.
- Fail to recognize that there is “no substitute for knowledge”. (Dr. Deming)