



Understanding A Problem

Know the Problem

Unless you take the time to be clear about the exact nature of a problem the solutions you adopt are unlikely to be effective. Long-term success comes from fully knowing the problem you want to resolve.

- When does it begin?
- How long does it last?
- How often does it occur?
- Who is affected?
- Who is not affected?
- When did it first start to occur?
- What happens when it starts to end?
- Who or what benefits from the problem existing?
- Who owns the problem?
- What exactly is the problem?

Define the Domain

Different types of problems need different types of solutions. These ten areas can be useful for looking at the area(s) of knowledge, expertise or action that needs to be addressed in order for you to solve a problem. For each of these areas a useful first question to ask is "how much of the problem is truth and how much is belief?"

KNOWLEDGE PROBLEM

You don't know what to do

TRAINING PROBLEM

You don't know how to do it

MOTIVATION PROBLEM

You don't want to do it

SKILLS PROBLEM

You are not able to do it

RULES PROBLEM

You're not allowed to do it

PROCESS PROBLEM

You don't know when to do it

MEANING PROBLEM

You don't know why to do it

STRUCTURAL PROBLEM

You're not responsible for it

RESOURCE PROBLEM

You don't have the equipment to do it

OPPORTUNITY PROBLEM

You don't have the chance to do it