

Team Building

The Joiner “7 Step Method Overview For Problem Solving”

Step No. 1 – Project

- **Goal** – Define the project’s purpose and scope
- **Output** – A clear statement of the intended improvement and how it is to be measured
- **Issues** – What is the project’s purpose? What problem or “gap” are you addressing?

What impact will closing this gap have on customers?

What other reasons exist for addressing this gap?

How will you know if things are better?

What is the history?

What is your plan for this project?

Step No. 2 – Current Situation

- **Goal** – Focus the improvement effort by gathering information on the current situation.
- **Output** – A more focused problem statement.
- **Issues** – Can the problem or situation be shown in a sketch or flowchart?

What are the symptoms? What happens when the problem appears?

Where do symptoms appear? Where don't they appear?

When do symptoms appear? When don't they?

Who is involved? Who isn't?

Step No. 3 – Cause Analysis

- **Goal** – Identify deep causes and confirm them with data.
- **Output** – A theory that has been tested and confirmed.
- **Issues** – What are the possible causes of the symptoms described in Step 2?

What are possible deeper causes of these confirmed causes?

Based on the causes you have confirmed, who should be working on this project?

Step No. 4 – Solutions

- **Goal** – Develop, try out, and implement solutions that address deep causes.
- **Output** – Planned, tested actions which should eliminate or reduce the impact of the causes identified in Step 3.
- **Issues** – What solutions could address the deep causes confirmed in Step 3?

How can you compare possible solutions? What are the pros and cons of each solution?

Which solutions seem to best address the original problem?

How will you try them out on a small scale?

Which trial solutions turned out to be most effective?

What are the plans for implementing them on a full scale?

Step No. 5 – Results

- **Goal** – Use data to evaluate both the solutions and the plans used to carry them out.
- **Output** – Data which shows how well the goals were met and the plan was followed.
- **Issues** – How well do the results meet the targets set for this project?

How well was the plan executed?

Step No. 6 – Standardization

- **Goal** – Maintain the gains by implementing the new work methods or processes consistently.
- **Output** – Documentation of the new method.
Training in the new method.
A system for monitoring its consistent use and for checking the results.
- **Issues** – What is the new standard method or process?

How will all of the employees who do this work be trained?

What's in place to assure that gains are maintained?

How will the methods, procedures, and results be monitored?

What means are in place to encourage ongoing improvement?

Step No. 7 – Future Plans

- **Goal** – Anticipate future improvements and preserve the lessons from this effort.
- **Output** – Completed documentation and communication of results, learnings, and recommendations.
- **Issues** – What are the tangible results?

What are the intangible results?

What remaining needs were not addressed by this project?

What are your recommendations for investigating these remaining needs?

What did you learn from this project?

How will the documentation of this project be completed?

How will this project be brought to a close?