

Continuous Improvement

The Relentless Pursuit of Better



White Belt Certification

Define



Define the Problem

Define Key Questions

- What is the problem or gap you are trying to address?
- Why is this project important (strategic link)?
- Do you have the right level of support (team, visible leadership support)?
- What are the potential benefits (time, money, other)?
- Who is your customer? What impact will closing the gap or solving the problem have on your customer?
- What are the boundaries (scope) of the project?



Problem Statement Template

1

Focus your problem by asking what, where, , when, who and which.

Not all the questions need to be answered

- What seems to be the problem?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - What type of problem is it?
- What do we know about this problem (previous experience)?

- Where does the problem occur?
 - Physical location
 - Step in the process
- Specific products or services

- When does the problem occur?
 - Day, time of day, shift, month, season, annual cycle
 - When doesn't it occur?
 - When is the problem greatest?

- Who is involved?
 - Who are the customers?
 - Who are the suppliers?
- Who else is involved? (department)

- How much?
- How frequent?
- How many?

Problem Statement Template

2

Focus your problem by asking who, what, when, where, and which.

Not all the questions need to be answered

- What seems to be the problem?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - What type of problem is it?
- What do we know about this problem (previous experience)?

- Where does the problem occur?
 - Physical location
 - Step in the process

- When does the problem occur?
 - Day, time of day, shift, month, season, annual cycle
 - When doesn't it occur?
 - When is the problem greatest?

- Who is involved?
 - Who are the customers?
 - Who are the suppliers?
- Who else is involved? (department)

- How much?
- How frequent?
- How many?

Use the questions on the left to help you write a focused problem statement:

Focused Problem Statement: <write X where you feel your problem statement falls>



Vague

Focus

If your problem statement falls in the shaded area, what data or other information can you collect to help you make your problem statement more focused?:

Problem Statement Template

Focus your problem by asking who, what, when, where, and which.

Not all the questions need to be answered

- What seems to be the problem?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - What type of problem is it?
- What do we know about this problem (previous experience)?

- Where does the problem occur?
 - Physical location
 - Step in the process

- When does the problem occur?
- Day, time of day, shift, month, season, annual cycle
 - When doesn't it occur?
 - When is the problem greatest?

- Who is involved?
 - Who are the customers?
 - Who are the suppliers?
- Who else is involved? (department)

- How much?
- How frequent?
- How many?

Use the questions on the left to help you write a focused problem statement:

We have inventory problems

Focused Problem Statement: <write X where you feel your problem statement falls>



Vague

Focus

If your problem statement falls in the shaded area, what data or other information can you collect to help you make your problem statement more focused?:

Problem Statement Template

2

Focus your problem by asking who, what, when, where, and which.

Not all the questions need to be answered

- What seems to be the problem?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - What type of problem is it?
- What do we know about this problem (previous experience)?

- Where does the problem occur?
 - Physical location
 - Step in the process

- When does the problem occur?
- Day, time of day, shift, month, season, annual cycle
 - When doesn't it occur?
- When is the problem greatest?

- Who is involved?
- Who are the customers?
 - Who are the suppliers?
- Who else is involved? (department)

- How much?
- How frequent?
- How many?

Use the questions on the left to help you write a focused problem statement:

We have a lack of inventory of "Z" products, which is causing lost of customer at stores a and b. This problem happens during Nov. and Dec. and it is costing \$100K usd in revenue. The materials department and supplier A are responsible for this problem.

Focused Problem Statement: <write X where you feel your problem statement falls>



Vague

Focus

If your problem statement falls in the shaded area, what data or other information can you collect to help you make your problem statement more focused?:

Problem Statement Template

Focus your problem by asking who, what, when, where, and which.

Not all the questions need to be answered

- What is the nature of the problem?
 - What happens?
 - What type of problem is it?
 - What do we know about it?
-
- Where does the problem occur?
 - Physical location
 - Step in the process
-
- When does the problem occur?
 - Day, time of day, shift, month, season, annual cycle
 - When doesn't it occur?
 - When is the problem greatest?
-
- Who is involved?
 - Who are the customers?
 - Who are the suppliers?
 - Who else is involved?
-
- Which is involved?
 - Which department?
 - Which machine?

Use the questions on the left to help you write a focused problem statement:

Focused Problem Statement: <write X where you feel your problem statement falls>



Vague

Focus

If your problem statement falls in the shaded area, what data or other information can you collect to help you make your problem statement more focused?: