

# Creative Solution-Finding Techniques

Based on "The 180 Principle" by Doug Kelley, CH, CSL

<b>1. PROBLEM / OUTCOME STATEMENTS</b>	<b>GOAL: To clarify the specific problem in an emotionally detached way</b>
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- Write a concise statement to reflect:
  1. Current Situation (problem).
  2. Desired Situation.
- Write your statements objectively, not subjectively.
  - Stick to the facts.
  - No value judgments or accusations.
  - Leave emotions out of it.

**Wrong (Subjective)**

**Current Situation (Problem):**  
The people in Shipping are too lazy to ship products with the right color to customers.

**Desired Situation:**  
They need to open up their eyes and read the customer's order correctly!

**Right (Objective)**

**Current Situation (Problem):**  
Increasing customer complaints about receiving products with a color different from what was ordered.

**Desired Situation:**  
100% accuracy in shipping the product with correct color as ordered.

<b>2. DUE DILIGENCE</b>	<b>GOAL: To dissect the problem for accurate understanding</b>
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- Answer the following questions:
  - "Why is this a problem?"
    - "Is this problem subjective or objective?"
      - If subjective, let it go... it is not really "a problem," it's a problem with you. Redo these steps to understand and resolve.
  - "What are the consequences of not resolving this problem?"
  - "What are the benefits of resolving this problem?"
    - List the benefits of all concerned, i.e. management, employees, customers, etc.
- List all potential reasons why this problem is occurring.

*Better questions beget better answers*

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*Better information begets better solutions*

<b>3. DISCOVER SOLUTION(S)</b>	<b>GOAL: To uncover the most logical and appropriate solution(s)</b>
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- Answer the following questions:
  - "What would have to change about this problem in order to resolve it?"
  - "What would I do if there was no down-side; nothing to lose?"
- List ALL possible alternatives no matter how unlikely; do not consider consequences at this stage.
- Brainstorm with your team, supervisor, customers, or confidant as appropriate to find more alternatives.
- Think Contrarian! Use the "180 Principle" by answering the following question:
  - "What should I NOT do to resolve this problem? Why?"
  - "What is a completely "unorthodox" approach to solving this problem?"
    - Alternatives should manifest that you may have not considered.
    - Sometimes the answer lies in a direction that you did not think likely.
    - Sometimes the answer lies outside your current belief system or core values (which doesn't mean it is immoral or illegal).
- List the Pro's and Con's to all possible solutions on a T-Chart.
- Decide on the most logical and appropriate solution(s).

*A single problem likely involves several solutions*

Pro's	Con's

<b>4. IMPLEMENT SOLUTION(S)</b>	<b>GOAL: To put solution(s) into timely action and reassess</b>
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- Establish a dated plan of action.
- Follow up, reassess, and adjust solution(s) as necessary.