

Problem Solving

A practical approach to solving problems

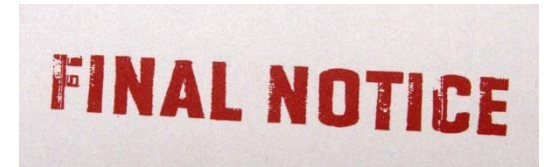


Problem solving

A structured approach to practical problems which are overwhelming



- Avoidance
- Distraction
- Do nothing



Problem Solving

1. Identify one problem
2. List all possible solutions
3. Pros and cons of each solution
4. Select one solution
5. Make an action plan
6. Implement the plan
7. Review: return to step 4 (or earlier step) if necessary

Identifying

WORKSHEET ONE



Identify one problem

I have too much work to do so I am completing work at home and missing time with my friends

List solutions

WORKSHEET ONE



List all possible solutions

Only do what I can complete during work hours

Talk to my boss about my problems

Manage time better at work

Advantages and Disadvantages

WORKSHEET ONE



Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
Only do what I can complete during work hours	Have family time. Will highlight the problem. Increasing pleasurable activities will improve my mood	Won't get all my work done. My workload will increase. I will get more stressed at work.
Talk to my boss about my problems	My boss could help me. Have family time	I don't want my boss to know I can't cope. Might not help
Manage time better at work	Have family time	Not enough time to complete all tasks

Choose a solution

WORKSHEET TWO



Select one solution

Talk to my boss about my problems

Make an action plan

WORKSHEET TWO



Steps	<i>Include what, where, when, and with who</i>
1	Email my boss to request a meeting. Monday 9am
2	List what i am currently finding difficult and any solutions
3	Go to the meeting with my boss
4	Explain to my boss my current difficulties
5	Agree a plan with my boss to manage my workload

Carry out and Review

WORKSHEET TWO



Review your solution

What went well?

i was able to explain to my boss that i was struggling to complete all my work, my

*What could you
do differently*

boss acknowledged this and we are going to do a trial period with a slightly reduced
workload

Trouble shooting

- Problem too big → Break it down into smaller chunks
- Too many problems → Pick one at a time to solve

Trouble shooting

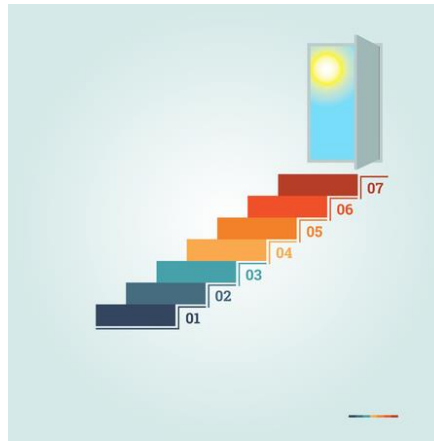
- Can't think of solutions → Ask what have I done in the past? Ask friends. Google it.
- Solution didn't work → Go back to step 4 (or earlier if you have new information) and choose another solution

Trouble shooting

- Can't decide which solution → choose one, perhaps one that seems easiest. Remember the solution doesn't have to be perfect, and trying something can help get you unstuck.

Take Home Message

Problem solving can help you manage life's difficulties with greater confidence, calm and effectiveness.



Next steps

- Practice
 - If you think practical problem-solving could help you we suggest you try it out on a problem today
- Make practical problem-solving a habit
 - Set time aside for using this technique on a regular basis

Next steps

- Tell someone else about this technique
 - Teaching someone is a great way of learning things yourself – and helping them
- All worksheets and a PDF are freely available at <https://www.talkplus.org.uk>