Strategic Problem Solving

Let’s Stop Wasting Time!

“Harnessing the Power of Positive Thinking and Doing”

Presented by the Strategic Problem Solving and Change Leadership Team, LLC

Lance Grimm: Founder and President

(319) 329-1425
LanceGrimm2309@gmail.com
www.SPS-CL.com
Strategic Problem Solving and Change Leadership (A Six Part Series)

- Part One: Proficiency Development Process
- Part Two: Strategic Problem Solving
- Part Three: Coaching Strategic Problem Solving
- Part Four: Deep dive into Systemic Root Cause Analysis
- Part Five: Change Leadership
- Part Six: Business Process Management

“Harnessing the Power of Positive Thinking and Doing”
If I had only 1 hour to save the world, I would spend 55 minutes defining the problem and only 5 minutes finding the solution.

Albert Einstein
“There is nothing quite so useless, as doing with great efficiency, something that should not be done at all.”

— Peter F. Drucker
“People think focus means saying yes to the thing you’ve got to focus on. But that’s not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully.”
Why should you care?

- If you don’t clearly understand the strategic problem = wasting time
- If you don’t get to systemic root cause = wasting time
- If you don’t validate everyone involved is willing to support and engage in solving the problem = wasting time

Let’s stop wasting time!
8 Positive Steps to Strategic Problem Solving

Step 1: Potential
Step 2: Obstacles
Step 3: SMART Goal
Step 4: ID systemic root cause
Step 5: Task plan
Step 6: Implement
Step 7: Verify
Step 8: Enjoy!
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

Strategic Problem: Make it short and clear

**Potential**
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think 10x – What’s your potential?)
2. Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
   - Desired response: “Wow, I never thought of my problem that way!”

**Obstacles**
1. What facts are available or needed to narrow down the obstacles?
2. Isolate or narrow down the problem with facts?

**SMART Goal**
1. What is the end goal or desired future state?
2. What will you accomplish if you fix this problem?
3. What is the desired timeline for solving this problem?

**To the Systemic Root Cause**
1. Using the 60/20 rule, what obstacles should you focus on?
2. Utilizing the “5 Whys” (what are the direct root causes?)
3. Now that you have the direct root causes, why didn’t you detect the root cause earlier?
4. Now that you have the detectable root cause, what is the systemic root cause?

Problem Owner: Coach:

**Task Plan**
1. Create a task plan to eliminate the systemic root cause
2. Generate a list of issues (include a Change Leadership plan)
3. Assign ownership to each task
4. Establish target date(s) for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

**Implement**
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Codependent on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

**Check**
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goals (defined in Step 3) and close Gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

**Enjoy**
- Share your story!
- Look for other gaps to solve!
**Step 1: Potential**

**Definitions:**
- **Potential:** Possible, as opposed to actual
- **Strategic:** Identification of long-term or overall aims and interests
- **Problem:** Gap between where you are today and where you want to be

**Definition of Potential as a strategic problem:**
- Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think BIG! - What’s your potential?)

**Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:**
- Desired response: “Wow, I never thought of my problem that way”!
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

Strategic Problem: Make it short and clear

Potential
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think BID – What’s your potential?)
2. Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
   - Desired response: “Wow, I never thought of my problem that way”!

SMART Goal
1. What is the end goal or desired future state?
2. What will you accomplish if you fix this problem?
3. What is the desired timeline for solving this problem?

To the Systemic Root Cause
1. Utilizing the 80/20 rule, what obstacles should you focus on?
2. Utilizing the “5 Whys”, what are the direct root causes?
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5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

Implement
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Cerdone progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

Verify
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goals defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 - Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

Enjoy
ENJOY your success!
Share your story!
Look for other gaps to solve!
Step 2: Obstacles

Think crime scene investigation and “Dragnet”
- “Just the facts - ma’am”

Facts should:
- Relate to why there’s a gap
- Be measurable
- Represent a list of the potential root causes

(to be further explored in Step 4: ID systemic root cause)
# Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

## Strategic Problem:

- Make it short and clear

## Potential

1. **What is the Problem?**
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think ROI – What’s your potential?)
2. **Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:**
   - Desired response: “Wow, I never thought of my problem that way!”

## Obstacles

1. What facts are available or needed to help narrow down the obstacles?
2. Isolate or narrow down the problem with facts?

## SMART Goal

1. What is the end goal or desired future state?
2. What will you accomplish if you fix this problem?
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## To the Systemic Root Cause

1. Using the 80/20 rule, what obstacles should you focus on?
2. Utilizing the “5 why’s”, what are the direct root causes?
3. Now that you have the direct root causes, why didn’t you detect the root cause earlier?
4. Now that you have the detectable root cause, what is the systemic root cause?

## Task Plan

1. Create a task plan to eliminate the systemic root cause
2. Generate a list of steps (include a Change Leadership plan)
3. Assign ownership to each task
4. Establish target date(s) for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

## Problem Owner:

- Coach:

## Implement

1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Capture progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

## Verify

1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goals defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

## Adjust

- ENJOY your success!
- Share your story!
- Look for other gaps to solve!
STEP 3: “SMART” GOAL

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time Bound
### Strategic Problem

**Make it short and clear**

#### Potential
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think BID - What's your potential?)
2. Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
   - Desired response: "Wow, I never thought of my problem that way!"

#### Obstacles
1. What Facts are available or needed to narrow down the obstacles?
2. Isolate or narrow down the problem with facts?

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1. What is the end goal or desired future state?
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### Problem Owner:

**Coach:**

### Task Plan
1. Create a task plan to eliminate the systemic root cause
2. Generate a list of actions (include a Change Leadership plan)
3. Assign ownership to each task
4. Establish target date(s) for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

### Implement
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Codify any progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

### Verify
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goals defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

### Enjoy
- ENJOY your success!
- Share your story!
- Look for other gaps to solve!
**STEP 4: ID SYSTEMIC ROOT CAUSE**

**Purpose:** Provide a step by step process for identifying the systemic root cause of a strategic problem that can be addressed within the constraints of the “SMART” goal(s) for the Problem.

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**Input**
Steps 1 through 3 of the strategic problem solving process

**Process**
Identify Direct, Detectable, & Systemic Root Causes

**Output**
Prioritized list of root causes w/estimated impact to SMART goal set in step 3

To be covered in detail in part four of the six part series.
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

Strategic Problem:
Make it short and clear

Potential
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long-term (Think "Why?" - What’s your potential?)
2. Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
   - Desired response: "Wow, I never thought of my problem that way!"

Obstacles
1. What facts are available or needed to help narrow down the obstacles?
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Task Plan
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2. Generate a list of tasks (Include a Change Leadership plan)
3. Assign ownership to each task
4. Establish target date(s) for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

Implement
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Establish progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

Verify
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goal(s) defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

Enjoy
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Look for other gaps to solve!
Step 5: **Task Plan**

Create a Task Plan:

Include actions required to eliminate systemic root cause:

- Take ownership, assign completion dates, and “Lock-in” dates
- Identify intended benefits and validate it will meet SMART Goal set in Step 3

Include a Change Leadership plan:

- To be covered in part five of the six part series
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

Strategic Problem: Make it short and clear

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Problem Owner: Coach:

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4. Establish target date(s) for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

Implement
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Cede/progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

Verify
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goal(s) defined in Step 3 and close Gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
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Adjust

Enjoy
ENJOY your success!
Share your story!
Look for other gaps to solve!
STEP 6: IMPLEMENT

Implement task plan
( Including a change leadership plan to eliminate the systemic root cause and drive adoption)

Verify actions are completed

Up until now, no changes have been made, solutions have only been offered and plans made
Be cautious of over-analyzing - Don’t wait for the perfect solution
Consider piloting improvements on small scale to reduce risk
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

**Strategic Problem:** Make it short and clear

**Potential**
- What is the Problem?
  - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long term (Think BIG - What's your potential?)
  - Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
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**Obstacles**
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**Task Plan**
1. Create a task plan to eliminate the systemic root cause
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**Implement**
1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Cede/monitor progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

**Verify**
1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goal(s) defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to step 2 Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

**Enjoy**
- ENJOY your success!
- Share your story!
- Look for other gaps to solve!
Monitor and collect data

Did you meet SMART goal(s) and close gap from Step 1?

**Yes:** Ensure problem will not come back, continue to monitor, and move on to Step 8

**No:** Go back to Step 2: *Obstacles*

*Were there any unforeseen consequences?*
### Strategic Problem

**Make it short and clear**

#### Potential
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long term (Think 10x – What’s your potential?)
2. Add Value by Challenging the Status Quo:
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#### Obstacles
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1. What is the end goal or desired future state?
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### Task Plan

1. Create a task plan to eliminate the systemic root cause
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4. Establish target dates for completion
5. Validate that if you complete all of the tasks on time, that you will achieve the SMART goals and close gap identified in step 1

### Implement

1. Implement the Task Plan to address the Systemic Root Cause
2. Closely monitor progress on actions to ensure completion
3. Verify actions are complete

### Verify

1. Monitor and collect data
2. Did you meet your SMART goals defined in Step 3 and close gap from Step 1?
3. If not, go back to Step 2: Obstacles and gather more facts
4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

### Enjoy

- ENJOY your success!
- Share your story!
- Look for other gaps to solve!

### Problem Owner:

Coach:
STEP 8: **ENJOY!**

**ENJOY your success!**

Share your story!

Look for other gaps to solve!
Strategic Problem Solving the POSITIVE way

**Strategic Problem:** Make it short and clear

**Potential**
1. What is the Problem?
   - Gap between where you are today and where you want to be in the long term (THINK BIG – What’s your potential?)
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**Verify**
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2. Did you meet your SMART goals defined in Step 3 and close Gap from Step 1?
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4. Were there any unforeseen consequences?

**Enjoy**
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Next Steps

- **Practice in a safe environment:**
  - On a simple problem (gap) first
  - On a process that you own, but have not delegated
  - Work with a coach if possible

- **Move on to increasing levels of problems (gaps):**
  - On a process that you own, but have not delegated
  - Work with a coach if possible
STRAategic PROBLEM SOLVING AND CHANGE LEADERSHIP (A SIX PART SERIES)

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"Harnessing the Power of Positive Thinking and Doing"
• Reference Books:
  • “Managing to Learn: Using the A3 Management Process to Solve Problems, Gain Agreement, Mentor, and Lead” by John Shook
  • “Toyota Culture: The Heart and Soul of the Toyota Way” by Jeffrey Liker and Michael Hoseus
  • “ADKAR: A Model for Change in Business, Government and our Community” by Jeffrey M. Hiatt
  • “The Challenger Sale: Taking Control of the Customer Conversation” by Matthew Dixon

• Contact Information:
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Desired Lean Culture

- Long-term philosophy
- Right process will produce right results
- Develop and Challenge your people
- Problem Solving Drives Learning

Enablers

- Proficiency Development Process
  - X
- Strategic Problem Solving
  - X
- Challenger Sales
  - X
- Change Leadership
  - X
- Business Process Management
  - X

Problem Solving Drives Learning