Problem-Solving
SESSION BACKGROUND

No matter how well you plan it’s highly unlikely that you will serve your term without running into problems. On those occasions it helps to know exactly what caused those problems so you can solve the problem.

In this session we will delve into how to use the 5 Whys Method. This is a commonly used problem-solving tool in business and industry and some of your participants might have already used this tool. While this session will be a high-level exploration of how to use the 5 Whys Method, there are many books and internet sites that can give you more information about how to supplement your knowledge of this tool.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• Define the 5 Whys Method
• Apply the 5 Whys Method
• Explore Using the 5 Whys Method in Your Zone
SESSION PREPARATION

Preparation Suggestions:

- **Consider the technical requirements for the session.** Do a test of the laptop/computer, the LCD projector and screen, PowerPoint slides, and the mouse/laser pointer, if appropriate.

- **Conduct an inventory of the materials for the session.** Use the Training Materials Checklist in the Instructor Planning Guide to verify that you have everything you need for the session.

- **Review all activities that will take place during the session.** Have you obtained and organized all materials needed to complete the activities?

- **Review content prior to the start of the session.** Ensure that you understand the content and that you know how to execute the supporting activities.

**MATERIALS**

- Instructor Guide
- Participant Manual
- PowerPoint slides

**EQUIPMENT**

- Computer
- LCD projector and screen
- Wireless mouse/laser pointer (optional)

**ACTION ICONS**

Refer to Participant Manual  
Activity
## SESSION TIMELINE

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**Total Time:** 90:00
It’s common for people to use information they already know or to use feedback they get from others to solve problems. Sometimes doing this is enough to find solutions, but what about when you are faced with more complex problems?

This session, Problem-Solving, is based on the 5 Whys Method. The 5 Whys Method is a problem-solving process developed by the Toyota Corporation during its manufacturing evolution.

While no single method can solve all of your zone’s problems, using the 5 Whys Method can help you gain deep understanding of a problem. Having this deep understanding will help you implement successful solutions.

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Define the 5 Whys Method
- Apply the 5 Whys Method
- Explore Using the 5 Whys Method in Your Zone
Transition

Problems can be people or process oriented. As part of your preparation for this workshop, you were asked to take the Conflict Resolution online course to learn more about how to handle conflicts between people.

This session will focus on process issues and show you how you can use the 5 Whys Method to help solve process problems in your zone.
MODULE 1: Define the 5 Whys Method

PRESENTATION: DEFINE THE 5 WHYS METHOD (20:00)

Show

Display Slide 2: Define the 5 Whys Method

Ask participants if they have ever used the 5 Whys Method. If so, ask 1 - 2 of them for examples of their experience. If they haven’t used it, move to slide 3.

Show

Display Slide 3: What is the 5 Whys Method?

What is the 5 Whys Method?

- Use to determine root causes
- Use for minor or moderately complex problems
- Use as an individual effort or in teams
- Use for problem resolution

State

The 5 Whys Method is used in business and industry to determine the root cause of a problem. A root cause is defined as the earliest, most basic cause for a given outcome. It can be used individually or in groups.
By repeatedly asking the question “Why” you can peel away layers that lead to the root cause of a problem.

Although the method is called 5 Whys, you are not required to ask five questions. You might uncover a root cause in three questions, for complex problems you could ask five or more whys before finding the root cause. Five, however, is used as a general rule because that is usually enough to uncover the root cause.

The 5 Whys Method might lead you to discover more problems than the original problem you were trying to solve. Your outcomes for using the 5 Whys Method will depend on your persistence and the quality of the knowledge you gather.

**Show**

Display Slide 4: How to Use the 5 Whys Method

**State**

Using the 5 Whys Method begins by defining a problem. When you have defined a problem, ask your first “why” question. Then ask more questions (typically at least 5) until you get to the root cause of your problem.

Once you discover the root cause, you can begin to solve the problem using curative actions. Curative actions are steps that you take to address the issues causing your problem.

In the next couple of slides, we will discuss an example of how the 5 Whys Method can be used to solve problems.
Show

**Display Slide 5: Problem – Your New Friend is Late**

For this exercise we will use a simple problem to show how to use the 5 Whys Method.

*Read the slide out loud to your participants.*

Begin by sharing the first why question with them (“Why were you late?”) and tell them the answer is because the alarm clock didn’t ring. Ask 3 - 4 participants to think of follow-up why questions for this story.

State

Thank you for sharing your ideas for why questions. In this situation we might start to assume that our new friend is a person who shows up late for meetings.

Ask

Does that happen sometimes? Do we see situations, make assumptions and think we know all we need to know about that situation?

State

Let’s explore this situation further by asking more 5 Whys questions.
Show

Display Slide 6: 5 Whys to Ask Your Friend

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<th>5 Whys to Ask Your Friend</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Why were you late?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Why didn't your alarm clock ring?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Why didn't your alarm clock have power?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Why didn't the you change the battery?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Why didn't you have replacement batteries?</td>
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Refer participants to page 1 in their participant manual. Review each question out loud and choose a participant to give you the response as written in the participant manual.

This questioning method will be new to some of your participants. Walking them through this exercise and giving them pre-determined answers will help reinforce their 5 Whys Method retention.

Begin by asking the first question and having a participant read the friend’s response back to you. Continue this exchange until all the questions are reviewed. Finally, read the root cause out loud to participants.

State

So, we go from assuming that your new friend might have a problem with being late, to discovering the root cause is that he forgot to buy batteries for his alarm clock.

You could continue questioning him to find out why he forgot to buy batteries, if you thought there was value in it. In this example the 5 Whys questions gave you all the information you need to have a deep understanding of why your friend was late.

When confronted with problems it’s natural to want to find solutions. Next, we will look at some solutions, or curative actions that your friend could take to solve his problem.
Show

Display Slide 7: Curative Actions

Using Curative Actions
1. Because the alarm clock didn’t ring.
2. Because it had no power.
3. Because the battery didn’t work.
4. Because he had no replacement batteries.
5. Because he forgot to buy new batteries.

State

Here are some example curative actions that your friend could use to solve his problem of being late.

Refer your participants to page 2 in their participant manual. Read each of the friend’s responses out loud and choose a participant to give you the corresponding curative action as written in the participant manual.

Ask

How does increasing the number of questions that you ask give you a deeper understanding of a problem?

You are listening for your participants to say that asking more questions can give you more information to use to solve the problem.
Show

Display Slide 8: Questioning Technique Advice

Questioning Advice

When you ask Why-questions, do it in a friendly, inviting way.
It can feel unsettling to others to be asked many questions in a short period of time.

Transition

We used a simple example to show you how the 5 Why Method works. Next, we will look at a problem that could realistically happen in your zone.

One last thought before moving on. People can get uncomfortable being asked many questions over a short period of time. Be sure you create a comfortable environment for your conversation to get the most informative responses from your contacts.
MODULE 2: Apply the 5 Whys Method

PRESENTATION: APPLY THE 5 WHYS METHOD (3:00)

Show

Display Slide 9: Apply the 5 Whys Method

State

To apply the 5 Whys Method, we will read the case study of a club that is very good at attracting new members but lost four of them this year. You are concerned about this because you never want to see members leave and also because increasing membership is an important goal for your zone. Losing these new members will make it much harder to reach your goal.

ACTIVITY: CASE STUDY (32:00)

Show

Display Slide 10: Case Study

Case Study

A club in your zone lost four new members this year. You decide to contact people from that club to get more information. Read the case study on pages 3 - 4 of your participant manual to see what they said.

Club President, Lion Marian, Lion Bev
State

Read the case study slide out loud to your participants. Then move to slide 11 to begin your activity.

Show

Display Slide 11: Activity – 5 Whys Case Study

Activity Directions

Form small discussion groups.

Refer your participants to the case study activity on pages 3 - 6 in their participant manual.

Ask participants to read the case study on pages 3 - 4 and then answer the 5 Whys questions on page 5. The first why question has been answered for them.

Ask participants to use the 5 Whys questions on page 5 to create curative actions on page 6.

Ask if there are any questions.

Begin the activity.

Call time after 10 minutes.

Keep slide 11 up as your participants continue to work on the activity.

Call on one group to share their 5 Whys. Then ask other tables if they came up with anything different for their 5 Whys.

Proceed to slide 12 to show the example 5 Whys for this activity.
Show

| Slide 12: 5 Whys |

![5 Whys Diagram](image)

State

Read aloud the answers on slide 12. Note if any of the participants answers were different than the ones on this slide.

It is possible that different people investigating the same problem will ask different why questions. But if you continue to ask why questions and keep an open mind about the causes of a problem you will ask the right questions that will lead you to the root cause.

In this example, the root cause is that new members feel more connected to our causes by learning from experienced members. If we hadn’t investigated beyond the first why, the focus would have been on new member orientation and would not have addressed the need of the new members to learn from more experienced members.

Often there isn’t just one problem but multiple problems that might not have been discovered if you hadn’t asked why questions. This is important to know as you work through issues and will allow you to create more effective zone solutions.
Show

**Slide 13: Possible Curative Actions**

Possible Curative Actions

First Why - Ensure consistent member orientation
Second Why - Appoint an orientation mentor
Third Why - Ask orientation mentor to train new members
Fourth Why - Assign experienced club members to new members
Fifth Why - Create an inclusive environment for new members

Read aloud the answers on slide 13. Ask participants if their answers were different than the ones on this slide.

Call on one table to share their curative actions. Then ask other tables if they came up with anything different for their curative actions.

State

As with the 5 Whys questions, some of the curative actions from your activity might be different from the curative actions shown here. Sometimes there are many ways to solve a problem.

The important thing is to make sure that the responses to your why questions are valid and that the curative actions you propose will address those responses.

Show

**Display Slide 14: Limitations of Using the 5 Whys**

Limitations of Using the 5 Whys

- Focus on symptoms rather than causes
- Formulate results based on investigator’s experience
- Identify different root causes from different investigators
- Isolate a single cause when there could be many
State

The 5 Whys Method is a great way to quickly determine root causes and plan curative actions but it’s not a perfect solution. The 5 Whys Method does have limitations that you should think about when you use it.

Some of those limitations are that there can be a tendency to focus on symptoms if you don’t dig deeply enough to discover the root cause. An investigator might be hesitant to investigate past processes that he or she does not understand. Different investigators may discover different root causes. Sometimes there is too much focus on a single root cause when there could be many.

Ask

Knowing these limitations, how can you still make the 5 Whys Method work for you?

Use this question for a short discussion if you think participants are receptive and will give insightful feedback.

Otherwise use this question as a transition to the next section.

State

The 5 Whys Method can work well as a starting point. Some root causes might be easily determined using this method. More complex problems can benefit from this method by yielding enough information to help you decide if you have the influence and resources to continue uncovering the root cause on your own or if you need more help.

Sometimes even a group isn’t enough to solve complex problems and that is when you should consider other measures. Even if that is true, using the 5 Whys Method is still helpful because you will have gathered enough information to start solving the problem, no matter how the problem eventually gets solved.
Show

Display Slide 15: Solving Problems as a Group

Solving Problems as a Group
- Invite those affected by the issue
- Select a leader for the meeting
- Ask why five times
- Assign responsibility for curative actions
- Communicate results to the group

State

The focus of this training has been on less complex issues that are being investigated by a single person. Let’s discuss what you should think about if you need to form a group to help you solve a problem.

If you involve a group in your investigation, invite those impacted by the problem and if there are too many, invite a good representative number of them. Appoint a leader for this group. Most likely it will be you, but it is possible to hand this off to someone who can efficiently guide and motivate your group.

Each member of the group should know how to use the 5 Whys Method. They should have the goal to ask why questions five times, more if needed.

When considering curative actions, be sure to assign group members to follow up on their completion. And finally, ensure that you communicate results of these actions with your entire group so they are aware of the curative actions being implemented.

Show

Display Slide 16: 5 Whys Best Practices

5 Whys Best Practices
- Focus on processes, not people
- Investigate without making assumptions
- Use groups to problem-solve complex “whys”
- Practice 5 Whys techniques to gain proficiency
- Confirm root causes to analyze and solve problems
State

Now that we have discussed the limitations of using the 5 Why Method, let’s discuss some 5 Whys Method best practices.

One of the most important best practices is to focus on processes, not people. Investigating problems can become a sensitive issue, so you want to ensure the focus is on improving processes and doesn’t devolve into blaming others for the problem. By focusing on the process, you can gain support in finding solutions.

Another best practice is to investigate problems without making assumptions. Always confirm information you gather from your 5 Whys responses.

Use the 5 Whys Method with groups when you are faced with solving complex issues. With others sharing information about a problem, it can make solving problems more efficient.

When you use the 5 Whys method, start practicing the method with smaller problems so you become comfortable using it. Then move to using the method with more complex problems.

Confirming root causes helps you analyze and solve problems. If you have a root cause that isn’t doing those things for you it might need to go back and ask more 5 Whys questions.

Transition

We have summarized a lot of information in a short amount of time about using the 5 Whys Method. If you are interested in learning more, there are many books and a lot of information on the internet that could give you more in-depth insights on using this method.

In the next module we will discuss how you can use the 5 Whys Method in your zone.
MODULE 3: Explore Using 5 Whys Method in Your Zone

Total Time: 25:00

PRESENTATION: APPLY THE 5 WHYS METHOD (5:00)

Show

Display Slide 17: Explore Using the 5 Whys Method in Your Zone

State

Now that we have had the opportunity to learn about using the 5 Whys Method, let's explore how you might use it in your zone. While using the 5 Whys Method works best when you are in your zone talking to contacts while working through problems, you can use this opportunity to start thinking about how to apply this method to problems in your zone.

ACTIVITY: CASE STUDY (20:00)

Show

Display Slide 18: Using the 5 Whys Method for Zone Problems

Activity
Using 5 Whys for Zone Problems
• Go to pages 7 - 8 of the participant manual to find your 5 Whys Worksheets.
• Select two weaknesses from your Zone Chairperson Workshop Pre-assignment SWOT analysis.
• Use the 5 Whys Worksheets to work through each problem.
• Be ready to share your findings.
In this module, we will explore how you can begin to use the 5 Whys Method in your zone.

**Activity Directions**

If your participants have not brought their completed SWOT analysis with them give them a couple of minutes to think of two problems that their zone is facing.

Have your participants complete the worksheets in their participant manual, then lead them into a discussion about their results using the questions provided for you below.

The worksheets are geared towards getting them to think about how to start using the 5 Whys Method in their zone, so you want to lead your discussion in that direction.

Ask your participants to work individually on this activity for 10 minutes and refer them to pages 7 - 8 of their participant manual. Ask them to use the worksheet on page 7 to answer questions about their first problem and the worksheet on page 8 to answer questions about their second problem.

Ask if there are any questions.

Begin the activity.

Call time after 10 minutes.

Now that you have had an opportunity to explore a couple of your zone problems and how you might be able to apply the 5 Whys method, let’s discuss your results.

Ask 3 - 4 participants to share one of their problems and the results.

Debrief the activity by asking them the following questions below.
**Ask**

Now that you know how to use the 5 Whys Method, can you think of a past problem at either the zone or club level where using the 5 Whys Method would have helped you find the root cause more quickly?

What are your thoughts about introducing the 5 Whys Method in your zone?

How would you engage a group of people in your zone to solve a problem using the 5 Whys Method?
CONCLUSION

PRESENTATION: QUOTE (5:00)

Show

Display Slide 19: Quote

"Maybe you are searching in
the branches for what only
appears in the roots"

Maureen Jaeluudin Huri

Read the quote out loud. Ask 2-3 participants for their thoughts about this quote.

State

This quote is a good summary of how we often approach problem-solving. Depending on the sense of urgency to solve a problem, we might react and “look for our solutions in the branches” rather than dig to get to the root cause. Think about that as you face problems and challenges in your zone.

Show

Display Slide 20: Session Objectives

Session Objectives
- Define the 5 Whys Method
- Apply the 5 Whys Method
- Explore Using the 5 Whys Method in Your Zone

Ask

Have we met our objectives?