



The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat  
Le Secrétariat de la littératie et de la numératie

# **The Coaching Clinic™**

## ***"working intelligence"***

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## ***Coaching Chip Number 8***

This Coaching Chip:  
[Five-Step Problem Solving Model](#)

### **Five-Step Problem Solving Model**

This Coaching Chip presents the backbone of a problem solving technique.

#### **Five-Step Problem Solving Model**

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##### **Step 1. Identify and clarify the problem.**

Look for the fundamental nature of the problem not causes, symptoms, consequences or solutions. It's important that the team clarify that the problem statement is clear and correct.

##### **Step 2. Invite the right people to participate.**

This would include people who are impacted or affected by either the problem and/or the solution. Appropriate people may be invited to participate at different times, when their contribution would be most valuable.

##### **Step 3. Identify possible causes then narrow to the most likely cause.**

Be sure to do this step. The key element of this step is to brainstorm a list of possible causes that answer the 'why' question. Once you have a broad list, identify the most likely cause.

##### **Step 4. Identify possible solutions.**

Then narrow to the preferred solution. It is tempting at this stage to jump to conclusions. Once again, brainstorming a list of possible solutions is important. Then narrow down to the solution you want to try first. More on identifying solutions in Coaching Chip 9.

**Step 5. Create an action plan with follow-up.**

There are four questions to answer: Who is doing What, When and How. More specifics at this point will produce better results. There is also a need to produce written records that are distributed in a timely fashion. The last step is to ensure that the 'owners' of the action steps completely understand and acknowledge their role.

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