



# PROBLEM SOLVING FOR PROJECT LEADERS

*Project leaders learn to solve problems applying creativity and a systematic approach*

*A big insurance company needed an educational program for a new generation of project leaders. During preliminary talks with the respective company executives, we designed a battery of the main skills required for their jobs. This was followed by a two-day workshop. Here the foundations for the training of the future project managers were laid and well received by the participants.*

## Situation and Challenge

An insurance company with 1300 employees requested our assistance in training 50 young project managers to prepare them for the challenge of a rapidly growing number of new projects.

A variety of skills were identified as necessary for this project work beyond the familiar company routine. Besides the leadership qualities required for teamwork, structured and creative approaches to hitherto unfamiliar problems and challenges needed to be trained.

## Approach and Solution

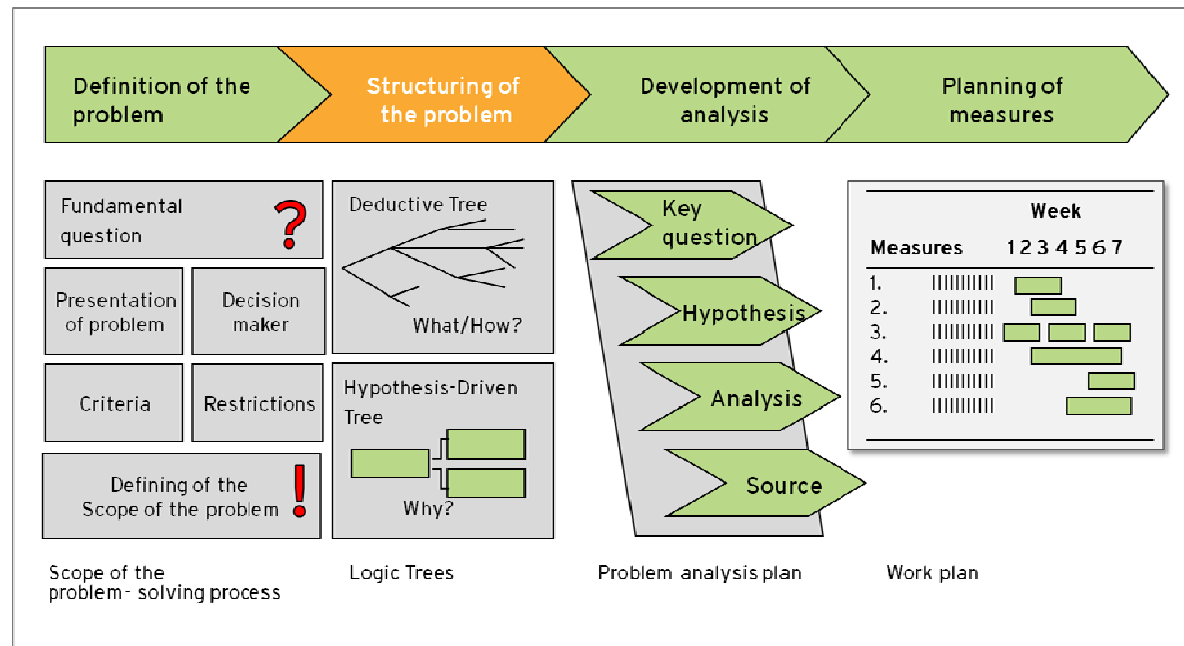
We established a two-day training period for the designated project managers to provide them with methods to structure a complex problem, i.e. to analyze its constitutional parts and then scrutinize their logical coherence of the parts closely in teamwork.

The team also learned how to approach the parts and the whole creatively, find new solutions and present their solution(s) clearly to decision-makers in the top management.

In order to avoid abstractness and boredom, we encouraged the participants to use their own ideas of problems they expect to be confronted with. The participants' ideas and suggestions were collected beforehand by us, refined and prepared for the specific purposes and operations of the candidates.

## Results

This methodical approach, though very demanding, was met with great enthusiasm and led to the desired effects of this workshop.



The immediate experience and joy of success after finding a solution to a problem so close to one's working environment and job obligations raised the level of acceptance of such methods and encouraged the participants to transfer these methods and the spirit aroused by them into their own routine and make them their own.

Some feedback from the participants:

- ▶ "A very well executed mixture of theory and practice. Very demanding in speed and load of material, exactly what I needed and expected"
- ▶ "I especially enjoyed the near-to-the-job training as well as the group dynamics arising from both examples and methods of approach"
- ▶ "That was a great learning experience, well balanced between theoretical and practical work. I enjoyed the great teamwork. Looking very much forward to the second session".