



Discovery
Health

**SAQI KNOWLEDGE FORUM
ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS TRAINING**

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AGENDA

- What is root cause analysis?
- Root cause analysis tools and techniques
- Components of root cause analysis
- Problem statements
- The 5 Whys technique
- The 5 Whys additional tips
- Simple example using 5 Whys
- Simple example gone wrong
- Example 1
- Example 2

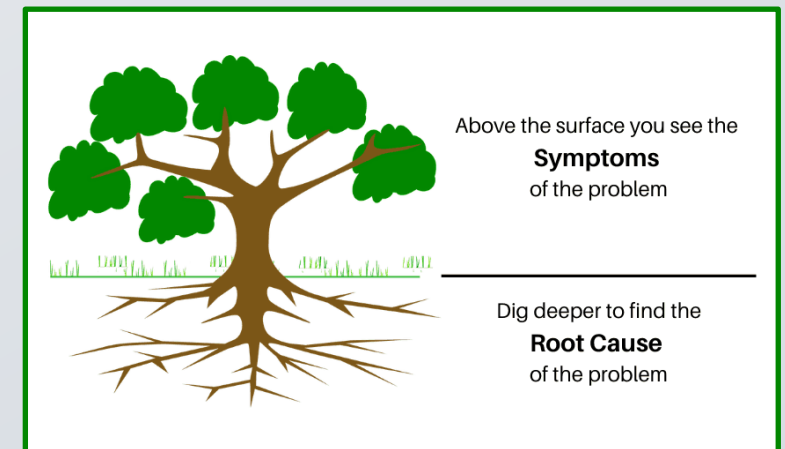


What is root cause analysis?



- Root cause analysis refers to the various tools, approaches and techniques used to find out the main cause of a particular problem. This process identifies a problem in a particular environment and prevents future occurrences.
- Root cause analysis identifies the CAUSE of a problem and not the EFFECT.
- Root cause analysis involves drilling down to understand why the effect actually occurs.
- When the actual root causes are found, and changes made to fix the root causes, the effect will be different.

Example: A person is using outdated material to give benefit information to a client. The effect is incorrect benefit information communicated. The cause is the outdated material. By changing the material used, the effect will be the communication of correct benefit information.



Root Cause Analysis Tools and Techniques



- There are various tools and techniques to conduct root cause analysis. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Ishikawa Fishbone Diagrams
 - Pareto Charts
 - Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA)
 - Affinity Diagrams
- Discovery uses the “5 Whys” technique.
- The “5 Whys” refers to the practice of asking, five times, why a problem occurred.
- The “5 Whys” is a simple yet very effective method of doing root cause analysis.



Components of a root cause analysis



- Evidence ... Understand WHAT happened
- Problem Statement/s... What we need to solve
- Root Cause identification... Ask the 5 Whys
- Corrective Action... Short term solution to the problem
- Preventative Action... Long term solution to the problem (stop re-occurrence)



Problem statement – Definition



A problem statement has the form

- WHAT is wrong
- WHERE it happened
- WHEN it occurred
- TO WHAT EXTENT and
- I KNOW THAT BECAUSE...

A problem statement

- Does not include causes of the deficiency
- Does not include likely actions or solutions
- Is clear, concise, and specific.

A good problem statement is essential to a good start.



The 5 Whys technique



- A 5 Why's must have:
 - A well-defined problem statement (at least one)
 - 5 reasons "why"
 - Meaningful corrective and preventative actions
 - If no meaningful actions are possible, then the root cause has not been identified.
- What are corrective and preventative actions?
 - Corrective – The steps which will be taken to fix the problem identified by the root cause analysis.
 - Preventative – The steps which will be taken to ensure the problem does not re-occur.
- Why 5 Why's (and not less or more)?
 - It just works!
 - When personal issues identified, fewer than 5 Whys may be appropriate.
 - When more than 7 Whys, the problem scoped poorly.
- Problem Statement
 - Ensure your problem is properly scoped.
 - Re-state the problem statement as many times as necessary to ensure the correct scope.



5 Whys technique continued...



- Always start each “Why” with a “because”.
 - If one doesn’t link the 5 Whys using “because” after the problem statement and the first 4 Whys, you are destined to go off track.
- Multiple problem statements / Multiple 5 Whys
 - A scenario may have more than one problem and will therefore require multiple problem statements and related 5 Whys.
 - A problem may have more than one root cause and therefore may require more than one 5 Why.
- Cascading 5 Why’s
 - A “Cascading 5 Why’s” is when one finds a root cause relating to a certain environment but further root cause analysis is required.
 - Example: If an operational area determines the root cause was system downtime which resulted in their handling time being above their stated objective, the root cause of why there was system downtime needs to be investigated.
 - The 5th Why “System downtime” should be re-stated as the problem statement and the systems department should conduct the root cause analysis.



5 Whys – Additional tips



- 5 Whys should, in the main, be done in groups. It enables more comprehensive and detailed analysis.
- Don't stop asking WHY too early.
- Be consistent on asking WHY and don't revert to asking HOW or WHAT.
- Don't jump to conclusions and to solutions before understanding the root cause/s.
- Always probe until you feel you have identified the true root cause/s.
- Do not follow a line of questioning which leads to a dead-end.
- Once you have identified a root cause, you should always be able to take action to fix the problem identified.



5 Whys – Simple example



Problem Statement: I was late for work today

WHY? The traffic was heavy

WHY? I was travelling in peak hour

WHY? My alarm clock did not go off

WHY? I did not set it

WHY? I fell asleep before setting it.



Corrective action: Do not climb into bed before setting your alarm clock to prevent falling asleep before setting it

Preventative action: Set automatic alarms which do not need to be manually set

5 Whys – Simple example gone wrong



Problem statement: I was late for work today

WHY? I didn't feel like working

WHY? My job is boring

WHY? A lot of the work is repetitive

WHY? It is the nature of the work

WHY? Every company has repetitive work



Example 1



Problem Statement: The specialist service delivery team did not achieve the required average customer rating score of 8.7 / 10.

1st Why - The average score included two team members who scored 3 / 10.

2nd Why - The two team members did not have the knowledge required for their skill.

3rd Why - Training was inadequate for the staff for this specialist skill set.

4th Why - The curriculum is poorly defined.

5th Why - No-one has defined what should be taught to staff in this specialist skill.

Corrective Action: Define the training curriculum for staff on the specific queue.

Preventative Action: Ensure all staff are trained on the new curriculum when commencing work in the specialist delivery team.



Example 2



Problem Statement: Almost every Monday and Tuesday, breaches and/or alerts are logged in call centres due to service levels not being met.

A typical, incorrect root cause identified is: “Short staffed”

An incorrect attempt using 5 Whys is presented below:

- 1st Why – Short staffed
- 2nd Why – Too many calls for too few agents
- 3rd Why – Not enough agents hired
- 4th Why – Recruitment acquisitions not being signed.
- 5th Why – Management says there are enough staff.

Actual root cause using 5 Whys:

- 1st Why – Short staffed
- 2nd Why – Too many calls for too few agents
- 3rd Why – Not enough agents hired
- 4th Why – Staffing model based on a typical Wednesday’s volumes
- 5th Why – Conscious decision taken by management to not recruit to cater for maximum volumes (on Mondays and Tuesdays).



Example 2 continued...



Corrective action: Confirm that service levels are being met on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. If so, no corrective action is needed. If not, correct the workforce recruitment plan.

Preventative action: Ensure workforce placement model is deployed within the department to ensure average service levels are continually met.

This root cause could then result in other questions being asked. For example:

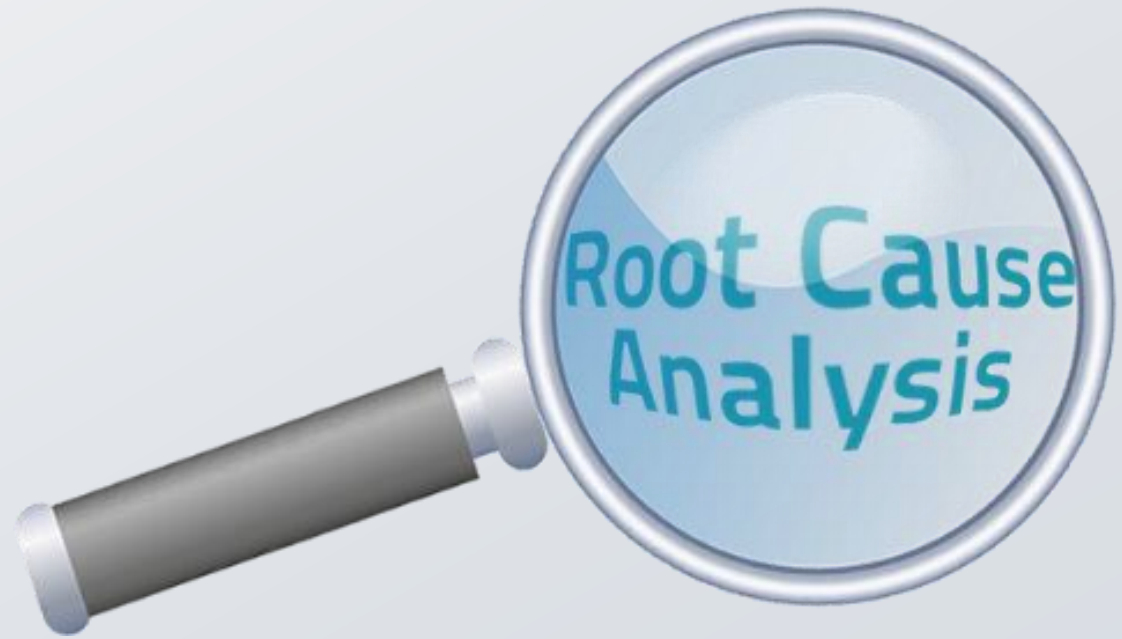
- Will the problems on Monday and Tuesdays ever go away?
- Is it acceptable to provide poorer service to customers on Mondays and Tuesdays?
- Is the decision to use Wednesday's volumes appropriate?



Summary



- Gather the evidence/ WHAT happened
 - Construct a good problem statement/s
 - Ask the 5 Whys
 - The 5th Why should bring you into an actionable solution
 - Implement the short-term solution
 - Get the long-term sustainable solution in place to prevent re-occurrence.
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- Easier said than done... practice makes perfect!





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