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Using Problem Analysis to Find Cause for a Deviation with Many or No Known Possible Causes

Purpose

To apply the concepts of Problem Analysis to a complex, cause-unknown deviation.

Instructions

1. Take one of your priority situations that requires Problem Analysis. Select a problem for which either no possible cause can be thought of, or for which many causes are suggested. Write the concern below.

   _____

   _____

2. a. Briefly describe what should be happening in this situation.

   _____

   _____

   b. Briefly describe what actually is happening.

   _____

   _____

3. Use a Problem Analysis worksheet to develop a Problem Statement and Specification. If working in a group, use a method that keeps the analysis visible to everyone. Find very closely related IS NOTs. Be very specific about the timing of each occurrence of the problem. For each IS/IS NOT pair, ask:

   - What is different, odd, unique, unusual about each IS compared to the IS NOT?

   Record information that is absolutely true for the IS and untrue for the IS NOT. Record only new information.

4. What has changed in, on, or around each of these distinctions? Date each change in clock and calendar time. Refer to information and documents you may have brought with you.

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   _____

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5. What causes do these distinctions and changes suggest?

6. Plan how you will complete the analysis. If you do not have the information to complete the analysis now, identify what you currently know and what you will need to know to get to cause. What information do you need to know to complete this analysis?

7. Use the phone, fax, E-mail, etc., to gather and confirm additional information. Identify specific questions you will ask.

8. What is your plan for completing this analysis when you return to your job?

