<table>
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<tr>
<th>Problem-Solving Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sample Techniques &amp; Activities</th>
<th>Sample Acceptance/ Completion Criteria</th>
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| **1. Identify need for problem solving** | • Recognizes that there is an issue to be addressed—usually some type of discrepancy or gap between current and desired conditions; may be a problem or opportunity. | • Environmental scanning  
• SWOT analysis  
• Gap analysis  
• Strategic planning | • Write initial working problem statement (one sentence): “The initially-perceived problem (opportunity) is…” |
| **2. Analyze Problem/Opportunity** | • Determines the causes of the problem, or nature of the opportunity.  
• Separates root causes from symptoms.  
• Distinguishes facts from assumptions and assesses the credibility of information.  
• Weighs the immediacy and long term importance of solving the problem, identifying criteria a solution must meet.  
• Considers the ethical and value dimensions of the problem. | • Research  
• Quantitative analysis  
• Fishbone Diagram  
• Business Process Modeling | • Refine working problem statement based upon analysis.  
• Write one-sentence problem statement: “The underlying problem is…”  
• Determine if the problem is actionable and worthwhile. |
| **3. Generate Alternatives** | • Generates or collects several alternative solutions. The goal is to arrive at multiple, feasible possibilities for comparison and consideration. | • Brainstorming  
• Nominal group technique  
• Benchmarking  
• Research best practice models | • Develop multiple alternatives that address the defined problem |
| **4. Decide Solution** | • Evaluates alternatives using established criteria. Alternatives may be combined and synthesized. Risks, constraints, and barriers to implementation are also considered in selecting the preferred course of action. | • Cost/Benefit Analysis  
• Feasibility Analysis  
• Risk Analysis  
• Financial Analysis | • Develop a solution that best addresses criteria and demonstrates awareness of risks, constraints and barriers  
• Make a compelling case for the selected solution for all relevant stakeholders |
| **5. Implement Solution** | • Plans and implements the project, including marshaling necessary resources, ordering of activities and allocation of people to required tasks. | • Project Management  
• Team Leadership  
• Change management  
• Marketing  
• Solution branding | • Develop a viable, detailed plan of action and implementation of the plan |
| **6. Evaluate Implementation** | • Assesses the effectiveness of the solution in solving the problem and reaching the desired goal. This may involve developing a monitoring process for generating such feedback. | • Assessment strategies will depend upon the nature of the proposed solution  
• Six Sigma  
• Project Review | • Evaluate gap between current and desired conditions  
• Provide individual, team, and organizational learning  
• Leverage learning & continuous improvement |