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- Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Business
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Welcome to Sustainable Development!
Today, communities and countries face enormous challenges as their social, economic, and environmental resources are damaged. Because these resources are interconnected, there are no simple solutions.

But be it disease, child abuse, crime, injustice, weakened economies, energy shortages, lack of good jobs, extinction of species, poverty, destruction of forests, pollution, or armed conflict, integrated solutions can resolve these seemingly diverse problems. However, acting on the interdependencies of the economic, environmental, and social elements of our world requires new ways of thinking about things and taking action – systemic instead of symptomatic – that will create a future where human society and nature can coexist with mutual benefit and where the suffering caused by poverty and natural resource abuse is eliminated.

Sustainable development has become a popular catchphrase in contemporary development discourse. However, in spite of its massive popularity it has garnered over the years, the concept still seems unclear as many people continue to ask questions about its meaning and history, as well as what it entails and implies for development theory and practice. Sustainable development therefore stands the risk of becoming a cliché like appropriate technology – a fashionable and rhetoric phrase – to which everyone pays homage but nobody seems to define with precision and exactitude.

The purpose of this course is to contribute to the discourse on sustainable development by further explaining the paradigm and its implications for human thinking and actions in the quest for sustainable development. We want to introduce key principles, present the important 2030 Agenda with its goals, and recommend implementation mechanisms.

2. Sustainability

There is no universally agreed definition of **sustainability**. In fact, there are many different viewpoints on this concept and on how it can be

achieved. In general, sustainability means that a process or state can be maintained at a certain level for as long as wanted.

However, nowadays – because of the environmental and social problems society is facing – sustainability is commonly used in a specific way: Sustainability can be defined as the processes and actions through which humankind avoids the depletion of natural resources to keep an ecological balance, so that the quality of life of society doesn't decrease.

Sustainable development can also be interpreted in many different ways, but at its core is an approach to development that looks to balance different, and often competing, needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations we face as a society.

All too often, development is driven by one particular need, without fully considering the wider or future impacts. We are already seeing the damage this kind of approach can cause, from large-scale financial crises caused by irresponsible banking, to changes in global climate resulting from our dependence on fossil fuel-based energy sources. The longer we pursue unsustainable development, the more frequent and severe its consequences are likely to become, which is why we need to take action now.

In 1987 the United Nations released the report Our Common Future, commonly called the Brundtland Report. The report included what is now one of the most widely recognised definitions of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

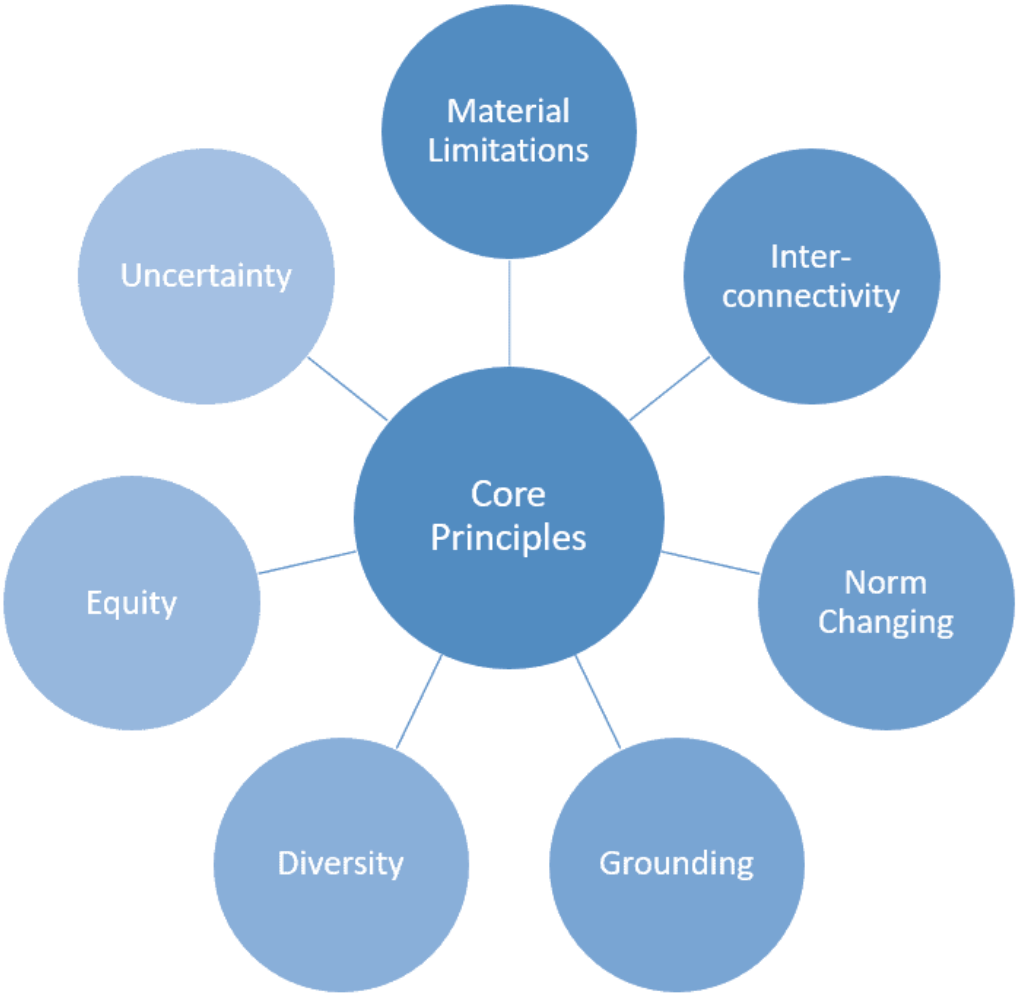
By this definition, sustainable development aims to maintain economic advancement and social progress while protecting the long-term value of the environment.

3. Basic Concepts

In this chapter we want to discuss some basic concepts. We will introduce the principles that support the argument for a sustainable future, present the major sustainability models and showcase some common indicators needed to measure sustainable development.

Core Principles

Our conversation on sustainability has to rely on the basic principles that support the argument for a sustainable future – those facts that pull us back to the causal roots of the problem. These rational principles include the following:



- **Everything material on Earth has limitations:** Earth is a closed system with regard to material cycling such that there is a thermodynamic irreversibility of natural processes. The Earth will not grow and therefore the size of things, such as population, matter. The closed nature of material cycling implies that there are ecological limits on human activity. Sustainability is about

recognizing and working within these limits, not stressing resources by overconsumption beyond irreversible states.

- **Many components of our global system are interconnected:** Problems in the economy, environment, and society are interrelated and are subject to becoming global in context. Human and ecological well-being is interconnected by the nature of the planet's components, which are intimately intertwined and systemic. Sustainability is a systemic means of addressing these complex interconnections and inter-dependencies.
- **Change is the norm, not the exception:** Society and its economic systems must maintain constant vigilance for change in the harmony of the natural world. Nothing is static. In carrying out programs intended to enhance society or protect the environment, we must recognize the possibility of unintended consequences. Mistakes will be made so the adaptability of systems to significant change is extremely important.
- **All socioeconomic factors are grounded in a healthy environment:** The environment is the plumbing of the planet. Nature is our life support. There is simply no way around this reality. Without functioning ecosystems nothing else matters.
- **Diversity within systems (natural or human) will contribute to the system's stability and resiliency:** Species diversity in ecosystems, with all its varied functions, is one of the more important factors in sustaining the quality of the natural environment.
- **Equity is the foundation of healthy functioning systems:** Opportunity for social equity is an important foundation element of sustainable societies, for without the potential for equal access to resources, opportunities, and good environments, envy can generate conflict between those who have and those who have not.
- **Uncertainty and ignorance are often associated with complex systems:** Science and knowledge are intrinsically uncertain, with new information continually altering and improving our perceptions and beliefs. Therefore, decisions based on scientific information must be made in the context of uncertainty, but with the recognition that further experimentation and monitoring could lead to more certain outcomes.

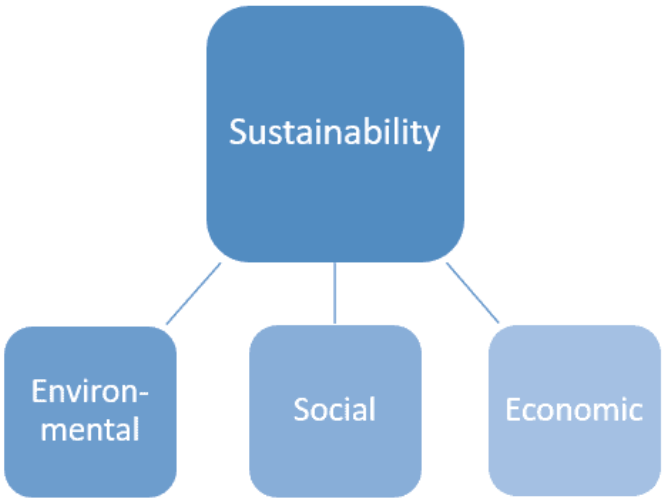
Despite inherent uncertainty, principles from science must underpin public conversation if global solidarity is to be achieved. These seven principles about our world are the reasons sustainability has become a

global phenomenon. Using these evidence-based principles as a starting point, it becomes much easier to have a dialogue about environmental and socioeconomic issues, especially when the true concerns of society are often controversial and cross traditional boundaries of economic, social, and environmental interests.

Models

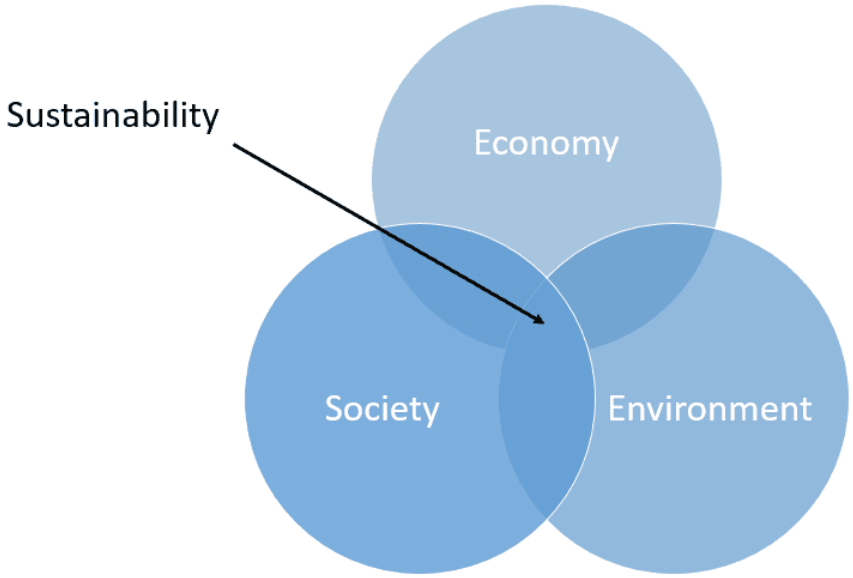
Moving towards sustainable development presents tremendous challenges. **Models** help us understand the concepts of sustainability better. They help us gather, share, and analyze information. They help coordinating work; and educate and train professionals, policymakers, and the public. We want to highlight the three most common models for understanding sustainable development:

The 3-Legged Stool Model



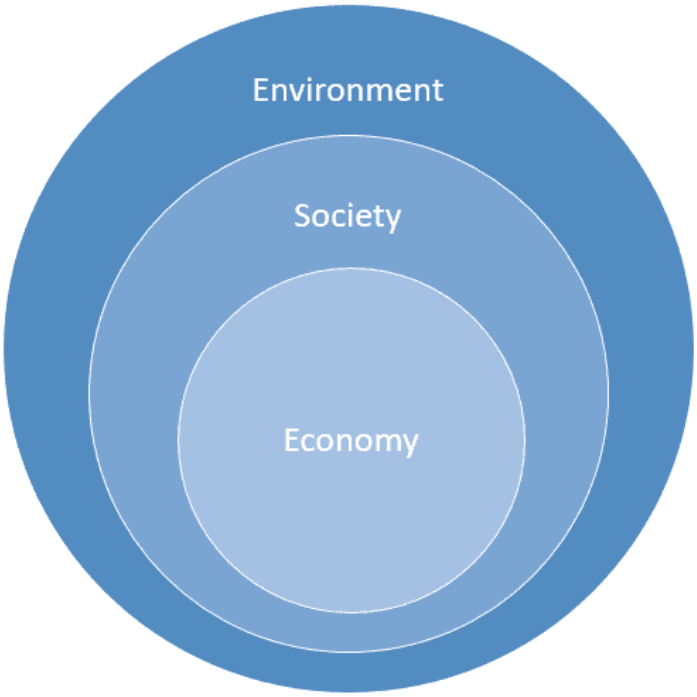
For years, experts used the three-legged stool model to illustrate the common three dimensions of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. The stool metaphor reinforces the three dimensions that are required for us to enjoy a high quality of life – and shows that society is unstable if one of them is weak. On the downside, all three legs look separate and equal.

The 3 Overlapping Circles Model



The overlapping-circles model of sustainability acknowledges the intersection of economic, environmental, and social factors. Depending on our mindset, we can re-size the circles to show that one factor is more dominant than the other two. For example, some business leaders prefer to show the economy as the largest circle because it is the most important to their success.

The 3 Nested Dependencies Model



The 3-nested-dependencies model – also called **Egg of Sustainability** – illustrates the relationship between people and ecosystem as circles inside another, like the yolk of an egg. This implies that people are within the ecosystem, and that ultimately one is entirely dependent upon the other. Just as an egg is good only if both the white and yolk are good, a society is well and sustainable only if both, people and the eco-system, are well.

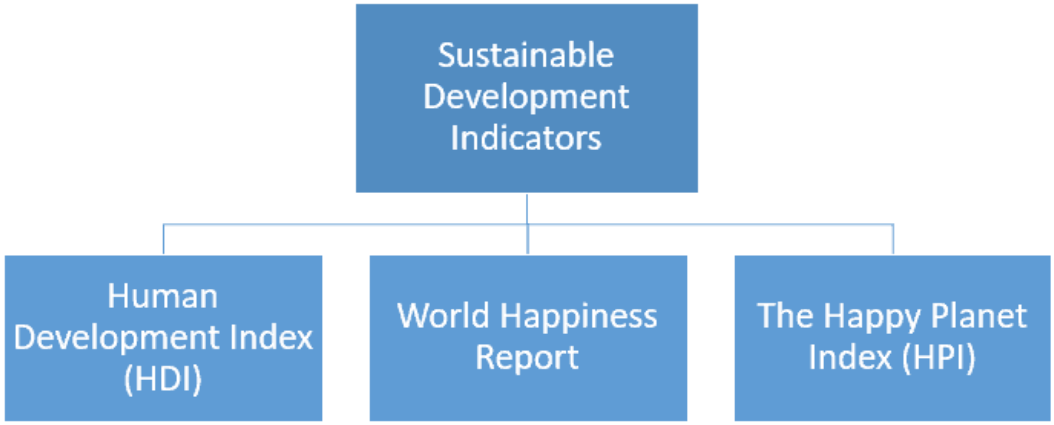
The 3-nested-dependencies model reflects our complex co-dependent reality. It shows that human society is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment – we depend on food, clean water, fresh air, fertile soil, and other natural resources. Furthermore, it's the people in societies who decide how they will exchange goods and services. They decide what economic model they will use and they can change them if they find their current economic models are not working to improve their quality of life.

Indicators

An **indicator** helps to understand where we are, which way we are going and how far we are from our goal. It alerts us to a problem before it gets too bad and helps recognize solutions to fix the problem.

Indicators of sustainable development are different from traditional indicators of economic, social, and environmental progress. Traditional indicators – such as unemployment rate, GDP growth, inflation, pollution, life expectancy, and water quality – only measure changes in one part of a community as if they were entirely independent of the other parts. Sustainable development indicators, on the other hand, reflect the reality that the three different segments are very tightly interconnected.

Three important multidimensional sustainable development indicators that show the links among a community's economy, environment, and society are described below:



1. Human Development Index (HDI)
The Human Development Index (HDI) is a measure of human development that captures health, education, and income. It is used to rank countries on a scale from 0 to 1 into four tiers of human development. A country scores a higher HDI when the lifespan is higher, the education level is higher, and the gross national income GNI (PPP) per capita is higher. In the 2019 report, the four best scoring countries were Norway, Switzerland, Ireland, and Germany.

2. World Happiness Report
The World Happiness Report is an annual publication of the United Nations. It ranks 156 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be. As of 2019, Finland was ranked the happiest country in the world twice in a row – followed by the Scandinavian countries Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

3. The Happy Planet Index (HPI)
The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is an index of human well-being and environmental impact that was introduced by the New Economics Foundation (NEF). The index is weighted to give progressively higher scores to nations with lower ecological footprints. In 2016, the best scoring country for the second time in a row was Costa Rica.

4. The 2030 Agenda

In 2015 all countries of the United Nations adopted the **2030 Agenda** and its **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere until 2030.

17 SDGs

In 2015, Heads of State and Government agreed to set the world on a path towards sustainable development through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda includes **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** which set out quantitative objectives across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development – all to be achieved by 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The 17 goals address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice:

These 17 SDGs build on the success of the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** in mobilizing collective action around a time-bound set of globally agreed goals. The eight MDGs were agreed upon in 2000 to halve extreme poverty by 2015 as a midpoint towards eradicating poverty in all its forms.

Many countries have made significant progress towards achieving the MDGs since 2000. However, a lot of countries did not make sufficient progress, particularly on environmental sustainability, and it is now

widely recognized that additional work is needed to achieve the ultimate goal of ending extreme poverty in all its forms.

Many societies have experienced a rise in inequality even as they have achieved economic progress on average. Moreover, the entire world faces dire environmental threats of human-induced climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Poor governance, official corruption, and in dramatic cases overt conflict, afflict much of the world today.

The SDG Agenda responds to these compound challenges and is, therefore, broader and more complex than the MDGs. Most importantly, it adopts sustainable development as the organizing principle for global cooperation, meaning the combination of economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Finally, the SDGs and related agenda apply to all countries – developed and developing alike.

Dimensions

One way to measure progress of the SGD Agenda is to focus on the five dimensions that shape the SDGs: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership. These “5 Ps” highlight how the SDGs are all interconnected. Progress on one P should always support progress on another.

1. People

"We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment." (2030 Agenda) The MDGs played an important role in focusing the world's attention on reducing extreme poverty, yet progress has been incomplete. In particular, least developed countries remain behind, as they face structural barriers to development. In many societies, the most vulnerable populations have made little progress. Mass migration, often caused by violence and conflict and gender inequality remain widespread. Large numbers of people – especially children – do not have access to sufficient food, affordable education and primary health care, and major efforts are needed to ensure universal access to basic infrastructure, including energy, water, sanitation, and transport.

2. Planet

"We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that

it can support the needs of the present and future generations." (2030 Agenda)
The scale of human impact on the physical Earth has reached dangerous levels, which threatens long-term progress against poverty and the well-being of rich and poor countries alike. Many natural resources and ecosystems essential for human and societal well-being are being threatened or destroyed, such as loss of biodiversity, air pollution, water shortages and pollution, deforestation and grassland degradation, and soil contamination. Climate change is no longer a future threat but a stark current reality. With the scale of global economic activity doubling roughly every generation we must change how the economy functions or the environmental consequences of growth will become overwhelming and indeed devastating.

3. Prosperity

"We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature." (2030 Agenda)
The world must shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns that do not deplete natural resources for future generations, and that promote prosperity for all. Unless this shift occurs, continued population and economic growth will further increase planetary pressures and exacerbate social exclusion and inequality. Current growth patterns are not providing enough decent work, especially for young people without adequate skills and training, and are leading to widespread unemployment. Women continue to be economically undervalued and excluded in many countries and regions.

4. Peace

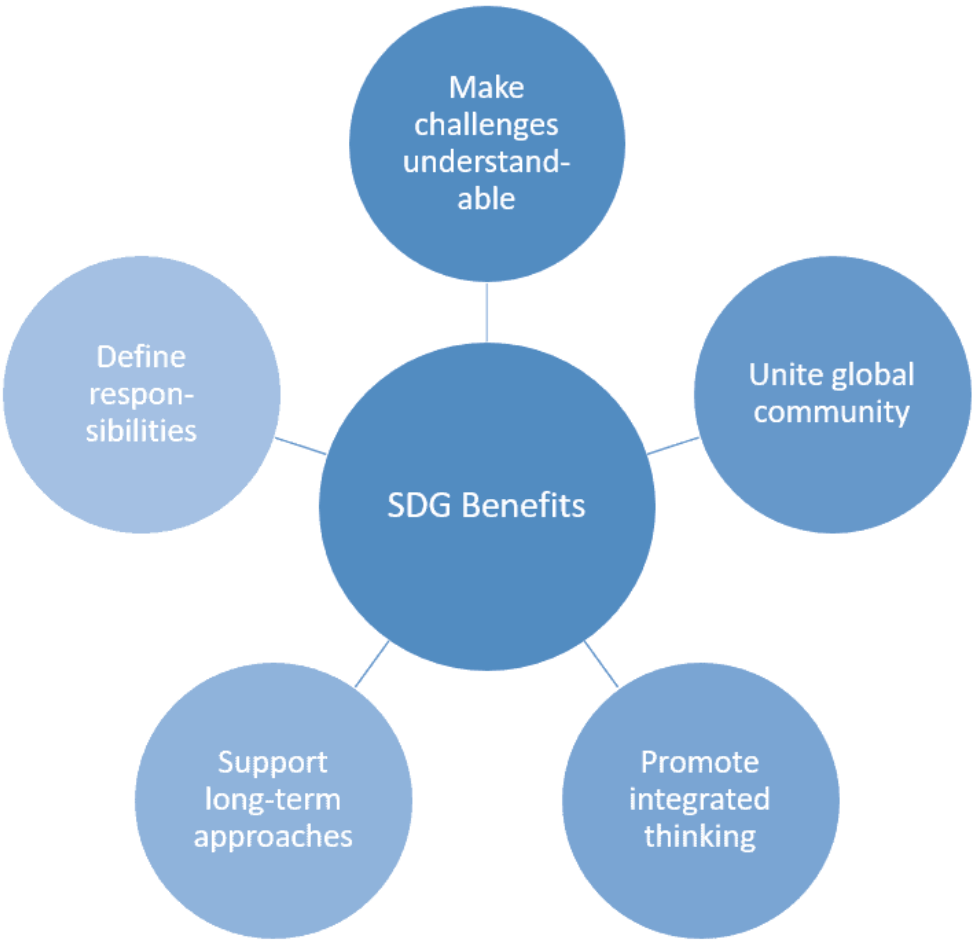
"We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies, which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development." (2030 Agenda)
Critical steps for sustainable development include promoting good governance, rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms, equal access to fair justice systems, as well as combatting corruption and curbing illicit financial flows. Effective and inclusive institutions are necessary to prevent all forms of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, torture, and violence. Most important, enhanced global cooperation is needed to prevent the spread of wars and extreme violence as is now afflicting many countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Asia.

5. Partnership

“We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.” (2030 Agenda)
The SDG Agenda calls for a renewed global partnership, indeed many partnerships at all levels, with all countries and stakeholders working in solidarity to achieve the goals. Today’s governments must coordinate with a broad spectrum of actors, such as multinational businesses, local governments, regional and international bodies, and civil society organizations.

SDG Benefits

But why do we need Sustainable Development Goals? Global goals, such as the MDGs and the SDGs, complement international conventions and other tools of international law by providing a globally shared normative framework that fosters collaboration across countries, mobilizes all stakeholders, and inspires action. Well-crafted goals are able to:

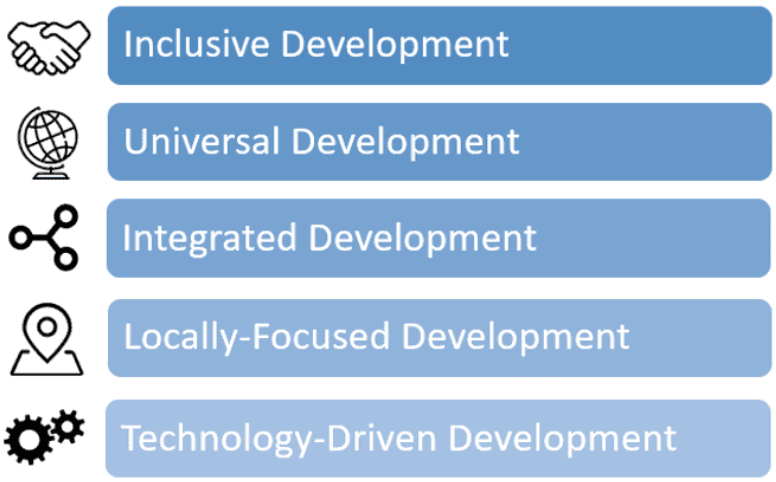


- **Provide a shared narrative of sustainable development and help guide the public's understanding of complex challenges.** The SDGs will raise awareness and educate governments, businesses, civil society leaders, academics, and ordinary citizens about the complex issues that must be addressed. Children everywhere should learn the SDGs as shorthand for sustainable development.
- **Unite the global community and mobilize stakeholders.** Community leaders, politicians, government ministries, academics, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, international organizations, donor organizations, and foundations will be motivated to come together for a common purpose around each SDG. The shared focus on time-bound quantitative goals will spur greater mobilization, promote innovation, and strengthen collaboration within epistemic communities or networks of expertise and practice. The experience in public health under the MDGs provides a powerful illustration of how communities can mobilize around time-bound goals.

- **Promote integrated thinking and put to rest the futile debates that pit one dimension of sustainable development against another.** The challenges addressed by the SDGs are integrated and must be pursued in combination, rather than one at a time. As a result, SDGs cannot be ordered by priority. All are equally important and work in harmony with the others. Each goal should be analyzed and pursued with full regard to the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental).
- **Support long-term approaches towards sustainable development.** The goals, targets, and indicators will allow public and private actors to identify what is needed and chart out long-term pathways to achieve sustainable development, including resources, timelines, and allocation of responsibilities. This long-term perspective can help to insulate the planning process from short-term political and business imperatives.
- **Define responsibilities and foster accountability.** In particular, the goals can empower civil society to ask governments and businesses how they are working towards every one of the new goals. Timely, accurate data on progress is crucial for effective accountability. The SDGs must drive improvements in data and monitoring systems, which look to capitalize on the "data revolution," i.e. significant improvements in local, national, and global data collection, processing, and dissemination, using both existing and new tools.

Opportunities

While some trends, such as human-induced climate change or social exclusion, are moving in the wrong direction, other development trends offer reasons for hope. We live in a time of immense opportunity, with the end of extreme poverty in sight. There have been tremendous technological advances. The SDG agenda sets out **five key opportunities** for development:



- **Inclusive Development:** The SDGs will engage multiple stakeholders at all levels of society to actualize the agenda. “All stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan.” No one is left behind or left out, as “governments, international organizations, the business sector and other non-state actors and individuals must contribute.”
- **Universal Development:** The MDGs set out goals mainly for developing countries, to which rich countries added assistance through finances and technology. In contrast, the SDGs are “universal goals” that apply to all countries and “involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike.” Achievement of any of the SDGs will require concerted global efforts to achieve all of them.
- **Integrated Development:** The SDG Agenda moves away from siloed approaches to development and promotes the integration of the economy, environment, and society. The SDGs are “integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development.” The success of one leads to the success of all. Included in this is the need for good governance and strong social networks.
- **Locally-Focused Development:** Implementing the SDG Agenda will depend heavily on local planning, community buy-in and local leadership, well-coordinated with the work of other levels of governance. Local authorities and communities are responsible for the realization of the goals at local scales, recognizing in particular interdependent relationships between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas.
- **Technology-Driven Development:** Rapid technological change, particularly in information and communication technology, is deepening the integration of the world economy

and enabling breakthroughs in productivity across the economy. New technologies also offer tremendous opportunities to deliver public services, including healthcare, education, and basic infrastructure to more people at a lower cost.

5. Key Transformations

Today, we still have a long way to achieve the 17 goals. The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the World in 2050 Initiative (TWI2050) introduced **six key transformations** needed to achieve the SDGs in a manageable way. These six transformation steps are:

Education

Education builds human capital, which in turn promotes economic growth, the elimination of extreme poverty, decent work, and overcoming gender and other inequalities. Three sets of interventions promote education and gender equality and to lower inequalities:

- First, countries need to expand and **transform education systems**. Universal quality primary and secondary school education is the backbone of education systems. It requires enhanced teacher training, curriculum development and continuous evaluation of learning outcomes. Higher education and lifelong learning opportunities are underdeveloped in most countries, despite the fact that they increase lifetime earnings and reduce inequalities.
- Second, to further reduce inequalities, countries need to **expand social safety nets**. These need to be complemented by anti-

discrimination measures, improved labour standards and measures to end all forms of modern slavery, trafficking and child labour.

- Finally, to promote economic growth, most countries need to **boost innovation** and ensure diffusion from research and development. Tertiary education, national science funding, innovation hubs and incubators can accelerate the adoption of new technologies.

Education builds human capital, which in turn promotes economic growth, the elimination of extreme poverty, and overcoming inequalities. Countries need to transform education systems, expand social safety nets, and boost innovation.

Health and Well-Being

The 2030 Agenda requires key investments in **health and well-being**. Design will be led by health ministries in coordination with other ministries. Interventions under the other five transformations, particularly relating to environmental health, can reinforce health outcomes and well-being.

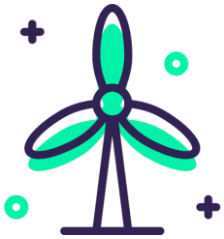
The principal intermediate output is **universal health coverage**. It requires a publicly financed health system that integrates prevention, therapeutic and palliative services; integrated information systems; and disease surveillance and control. Health systems need to focus on primary healthcare and offer interventions for maternal, newborn and child health; effective prevention and treatment of infectious diseases; and non-communicable disease control, including mental health and basic surgery. In combination with improved girls' education and gender equality, investments in child health and sexual and reproductive health will accelerate the voluntary transition towards low fertility rates. Community health programs can improve health outcomes significantly.

Health interventions outside the health sector can improve the social determinants of health. They include policies and metrics to raise well-

being and quality of life. Changes to social norms and behaviors promote healthy lifestyles through better hygiene; lower consumption of tobacco, alcohol and other harmful substances; and abstaining from risky behavior (for example, practicing safe sex prevents the spread of sexually transmitted diseases).

Universal health coverage that supports an integrated health care model will direct care and focus toward cultivating healthier lifestyles.

Energy and Industry



The 2030 Agenda aims to ensure universal access to modern energy sources, decarbonize the energy system and reduce industrial pollution. This step requires close coordination among several government ministries, including buildings and construction, energy, environment and transport.

Decarbonizing energy systems requires approaches across power generation, transmission, buildings, transport and industry. Shifting from fossil fuels to zero-carbon sources – including wind, solar, hydro, geothermal and tidal energy – is essential. Smart power grids can reduce electricity storage needs and increase the efficiency of the power grids. Countries also need to improve energy efficiency in final energy use, including transport, heating and cooling of buildings, industrial energy use and household appliances.

Key industrial pollutants include methane, nitrous oxides and sulfur dioxide, as well as organic and other inorganic pollutants and plastics. Responsible consumption and production cut across several of the other transitions, allowing us to do more with fewer resources – we need to adopt a circular economy approach, improve waste management, and reduce demand.

Creating access to sustainable sources of energy, decreasing carbon emissions, and eliminating the contamination of natural resources are critical steps for securing efficient use of energy.

Food, Land and Water

Our current land-use and agricultural policies lead to persistent hunger, malnutrition and obesity. They account for a quarter of all greenhouse-gas emissions, over 90% of scarcity-weighted water use, most losses of biodiversity, over-exploitation of fisheries, and pollution of water and air.

At the same time, food systems are highly vulnerable to climate change and land degradation. Integrated strategies are needed to make food systems, land-use and oceans sustainable and healthy for people. This transformation exhibits the highest potential for trade-offs across interventions. Increases in agricultural production may exacerbate biodiversity loss and water scarcity. Rising incomes around the world will add to the pressure on food systems, unless diets become healthier and more environmentally sustainable.

- Countries have to maintain **long-term resilient agricultural systems and fisheries**. Major increases are needed in yields and resource-use efficiency in terms of nutrients, water, greenhouse-gas emissions and chemicals.
- Forests, soils, peatlands, wetlands, savannas, coastal marine areas and other ecosystems must be **conserved and restored**.
- **Consumer demand** must shift towards healthier diets, including a move away from highly processed food and red meat.
- Finally, countries require **strategic** land-use, ocean-use and water-management approaches to help manage competing claims for food production, urban development, transport, tourism, and biodiversity conservation.

Strategies should be designed and implemented by ministries of agriculture and forestry, environment, water and natural resources, fisheries and marine resources, and health.

Achieving access to nutritional food and clean water for all, while protecting the biosphere and the oceans, requires more efficient and

sustainable food systems – for example by increasing agricultural productivity and reducing meat consumption.

Sustainable Cities

By the year 2050, about 70% of humanity will live in cities and other urban areas. Cities are particularly vulnerable to climate change, but most cities are far from meeting the triple objective of being economically productive, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

- Ensuring access to the **water supply, sanitation and waste disposal** the first focus of this transformation. An estimated 1.2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and 2.4 billion people do not have access to safely managed sanitation.
- Sustainable and efficient **mobility** is a second priority. This includes infrastructure for roads, railways and ports, as well as public transport systems and ride-sharing. Particular attention must be paid to reducing air pollution from transport.
- Third, cities need to promote more **safe and healthy settlements** to accommodate rising urban populations. This will require adequate green spaces, infrastructure for cycling and walking, and other interventions to increase resource-use efficiency and quality of life.
- Finally, cities also need to **enhance resilience** against climate change and extreme weather events, including more heatwaves, droughts, flooding and enhanced disease transmission.

Organizing this transformation is complex, owing to the large number of stakeholders involved and the distribution of responsibilities between national and local levels of government. Ministries of transport, water and sanitation, and urban development will play central roles.

Transforming our settlements will benefit the world population and the environment – such as through ‘smart’ infrastructure, decent housing and high connectivity.

Digital Revolution

Digital technologies are disrupting nearly every sector of the economy, including agriculture (precision agriculture), manufacturing (robotics), retail (e-commerce), finance (e-payments), media (social networks), health (diagnostics), education (online learning), and public administration (e-governance).

New technologies can raise productivity, lower production costs, improve resource efficiencies, reduce emissions, enable the use of big data, and make public services more readily available. Yet there are also risks that countries must identify and tackle – like the loss of jobs, particularly for lower-skilled workers, and the shift of income distribution from labour to capital.

Universal access to high-quality, low-cost mobile broadband is essential to capture the benefits of the digital revolution. Countries also need to promote the digitization of healthcare and education. Finally, public institutions need to be strengthened to govern and shape digital innovations towards sustainable development.

Science and technology need to support sustainable development. Digital technologies can raise productivity, lower production costs, reduce emissions, expand access, dematerialise production, and make public services more readily available.
All six key transformations are **synergistic** without any major trade-offs: The development of one transformation step should always reinforce other transformations.

6. Implementation

Planning is the process of thinking about the activities required to achieve a desired goal. Implementing your plan is putting your goals into motion. This is the “doing” stage. Here, we will discuss priorities, actors involved, and implementation tools.

Priorities

Before embarking on SDG implementation, stakeholders should take stock of where their country, sector, region, or city stands with regards to achieving all seventeen goals. Indicators, based on the latest available data, should be used to assess the country or city’s broad performance on the SDGs.

Identifying priorities does not mean choosing one goal at the expense of another; the SDGs were crafted as an integrated set, which are interdependent and complementary. Instead, prioritization means identifying those areas lagging furthest behind and catalyzing resources, awareness, and policy actions in those areas to spur rapid progress.

Prioritization can also mean identifying specific areas to pursue in the short or medium term as an entry point to the broader transformation towards sustainable development.

Example: Prioritization at the German Federal Association for Sustainability

German Federal Association
for Sustainability

The German Federal Association for Sustainability integrates the Sustainable Development Goals into its fields of action. And while it considers the emphasis on the equivalence of objectives as essential, it also considers a **prioritization of the goals** as meaningful. By prioritizing, it understands the classification of the contents of the individual goals according to causes and consequences, which in turn result in activities and measures to fight causes and consequences.

The German Federal Association for Sustainability puts **Goal 10 – Reduced inequalities** in the center of its approach. It believes that all

other goals address symptoms that occur as a result of inequality. This is the reason why its official goal prioritization looks like this:

Stakeholders

Developing SDG strategies and plans should be a multi-stakeholder process, engaging national and local government representatives, civil society, businesses, faith-based groups and representatives from academia and science.

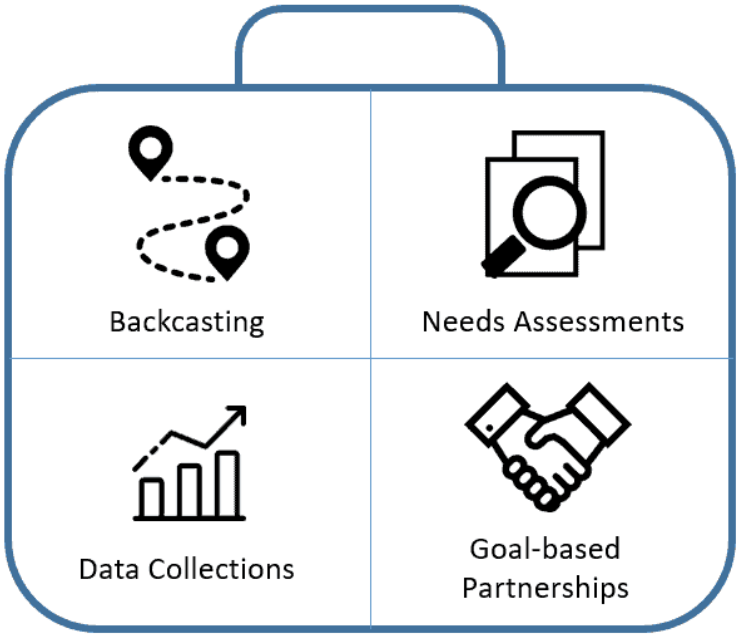
Effective multi-stakeholder engagement will build on the expertise of individual actors to do collective problem-solving. Different actors will need clearly defined roles and responsibilities to make the process work. This section discusses what various stakeholders can contribute to the process and how they may best be included:

- **National Governments** develop national strategies, agree upon a national monitoring framework, and establish multi-stakeholder advisory groups to support implementation.
- **Local Governments** will be a critical frontline of implementing the agenda since cities and communities will be dynamic test beds for new sustainable development strategies.
- **Academia** in the form of universities and educational institutions can incubate new technologies, identify strategic priorities, and train a new generation of sustainable leaders.
- **Civil society groups** represent the needs of underrepresented communities and regions. They also have extensive experience in delivering services to the poor.
- **International financial institutions**, like the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF), should participate both in strategy formation and in goal-based committees.
- **Development partners** can contribute or donate technical and managerial expertise.
- **Businesses** should be represented in the SDG planning process, as opportunities for collaboration abound. When working in partnership with business, governments should keep in mind the profit-driven nature of companies.

- **Tools**

- Sustainable development requires a long-term transformation, which in turn requires longer-term planning processes than the usual annual budgets or medium-term expenditure frameworks. The SDG framework calls for 15-year strategies and some SDGs even require planning over several decades.

Sustainable Development Toolbox



-
- **1. Backcasting**:
  A best practice in long-term planning is backcasting. This means generating a desirable future, and then **looking backwards** from that future to the present in order to strategize and to plan how it could be achieved. The core of the backcasting exercise is creating a long-term plan that maps out targets, milestones, and steps that need to be taken to achieve the desired endpoint by the desired date, including financing needs.
- **2. Needs Assessments:**
  Countries must mobilize adequate public and private resources to invest in key sustainable development areas. Conducting needs assessments to determine the volume of public and private **investment required** is a complex undertaking that will require significant work in most countries. On the basis of SDG needs assessments countries, regions, or cities can develop financing strategies that include private financing opportunities, government resource mobilization, and international public financing.
- **3. Data Collections:**
  The success of the SDG Agenda hangs on careful **monitoring of**

the progress. High-quality, timely and reliable data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress. Collecting reliable data will depend on crafting a robust set of national monitoring indicators, strengthening statistical capacity, and harnessing new technologies.

- **4. Goal-based Partnerships:**
  The SDGs affirm the importance of partnerships at the **national and international level**, from bilateral partnerships between states to combinations of public, private, and multilateral actors. Each sector has unique features and requirements for success, but shared goals and metrics help to mobilize all actors involved in a particular area. Backcasting can show how the goals can be achieved through sustained investments and supportive policies.

7. Examples

Sustainable development involves satisfying the needs of the present population without endangering the capability of the future population to satisfy its own needs. Though many examples of sustainable development can be discussed, five key examples are summarized here:

1. Wind Energy
Harnessing onshore and offshore wind energy to provide power for homes, offices, and other buildings is one of the best examples of sustainable development. After all, wind is a free resource. If you live in an area with “good wind,” it’s possible to supplement or replace grid power at no cost, once you’ve invested in a windmill.

2. Solar Energy
From small roof-top solar panels to massive solar farms: energy from the sun is available in limitless supply in most areas. Installing a photovoltaic system allows energy from the sun to be harnessed to replace or supplement grid power without the need to use up resources that are not renewable.

3. Crop Rotation
Crop rotation is the practice of planting different crops in the same farm to enhance soil fertility and assist control diseases and insects. Crop rotation is beneficial in many ways – most importantly, it's chemical-free. Not only can this form of development benefit commercial farmers, but it can also aid those who garden at home.

4. Green Space
Incorporating green spaces into urban development is an example of sustainable development. Green spaces include parks and other areas where plants and wildlife are encouraged to thrive. These spaces also offer the public great opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation, especially in dense, metropolitan areas.

5. Efficient Water Fixtures
Many countries in the world are becoming water stressed and we are beginning to understand that water is not as unlimited as we once believed. Installing efficient showers, toilets, and other water using appliances in existing structures and new construction is a way of making the most of available resources by conserving water.

8. Conclusion

Sustainable development has attracted much attention lately. The ultimate aim of sustainable development is to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations by balancing economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion.

The 2030 Agenda inspires us to think creatively by leveraging innovative approaches and critically rethinking the way we approach the development challenges of today. By adopting the Agenda, the UN member states committed to an ambitious plan of action that requires the concerted efforts of all segments of society including civil society, development practitioners, the private sector, and academia.

Each one of us, in our personal capacities, also needs to take concrete steps towards sustainable life choices.

The key transformations require deep, deliberate, long-term structural changes in resource use, infrastructure, institutions, technologies and social relations that must be undertaken in a short period of time.

Governments, with support from science, need to set medium-term targets with time horizons and develop detailed policy pathways for achieving these targets. This requires working backwards from these time-bound targets to identify the systems design, investment trajectories, and technologies that can deliver the long-term goals.

Financing must be aligned with long-term pathways. Most countries will need to increase domestic resource mobilization, and low-income developing countries will require increased international financial assistance. To mobilize private financing and direct it towards each transformation, governments can use corrective pricing through taxes, charges or tradeable permits.

The transformations also require fundamental changes in norms, belief systems, and cognitive heuristics. Social movements, public activism, and awareness campaigns should explain the ethics of sustainable development.

Finally, the most essential foundation of sustainable development is peace, which requires international cooperation. A fair trade system would support economic development in rich and poor countries alike.

Welcome to Sustainable Business!
Today, more and more companies are integrating sustainability into their business strategies to improve processes, pursue growth, and add value to their firms rather than focusing on reputation alone.

The concept of sustainable development has received growing recognition, but it is a new idea for many business executives. For most, the concept remains abstract and theoretical.

In 1987, the United Nations published “Our Common Future” – also known as the Brundtland Report. The Brundtland Report outlined the following description of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Protecting an organization’s capital base is a well-accepted business principle. Yet organizations do not generally recognize the possibility of extending this notion to the world’s natural and human resources.

To understand this definition in terms of business, we will define sustainable business as one that operates in the interest of all current and future stakeholders in a manner that ensures the long-term health and survival of the business and its associated economic, social, and environmental systems.

A **sustainable business** is concerned about the current and future social, environmental, and economic impacts associated with its operations.

But how does a business measure whether it is a sustainable business? The “**triple bottom line**” was coined by John Elkington in 1994 and basically means that a sustainable business not only looks to have a healthy economic bottom line, but also healthy social and environmental bottom lines. This concept is also known as: People, Planet, Profit.

- **Profit**: Historically, businesses only measured their value through their **economic bottom line**, which includes elements like sales, profits, taxes paid, or monetary flows.
- **People:** The **social bottom line** can be measured by elements like labor practices, human rights, or product responsibility. Social bottom lines can also be measured by community impact, such as the total financial contributions made to nonprofits.
- **Planet**: The **environmental bottom line** is basically a company's environmental footprint and typically is measured as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as well as energy, waste and water usage.

As you progress this course, we challenge you to not think of sustainability as a program or an activity. Rather, sustainability is a mindset and worldview.

2. Risks and Benefits

In the past, responding to environmental problems has always been a no-win proposition for managers. Recently, however, this perspective has changed: Being green and sustainable is no longer a cost of doing

business; it is a catalyst for innovation, new market opportunity, and wealth creation.

Challenges

Business executives, environmental activists and academics all have different ideas what it means for a business to be sustainable. Especially top managers are often afraid that their firm's "sustainable move" could be expensive and hurt the company. Here, we will discuss four major challenges of becoming a sustainable business:

1. Vague Definition
The lack of a clear definition means there is a lack of accountability, as well. Businesses are increasingly claiming to be sustainable, but few can provide hard evidence that their business practices are not damaging the environment. **Greenwashing** is when a company or organization spends more time and money on marketing themselves as environmentally friendly than on minimizing their environmental impact. It is a deceitful advertising gimmick intended to mislead consumers who prefer to buy goods and services from environmentally conscious brands.

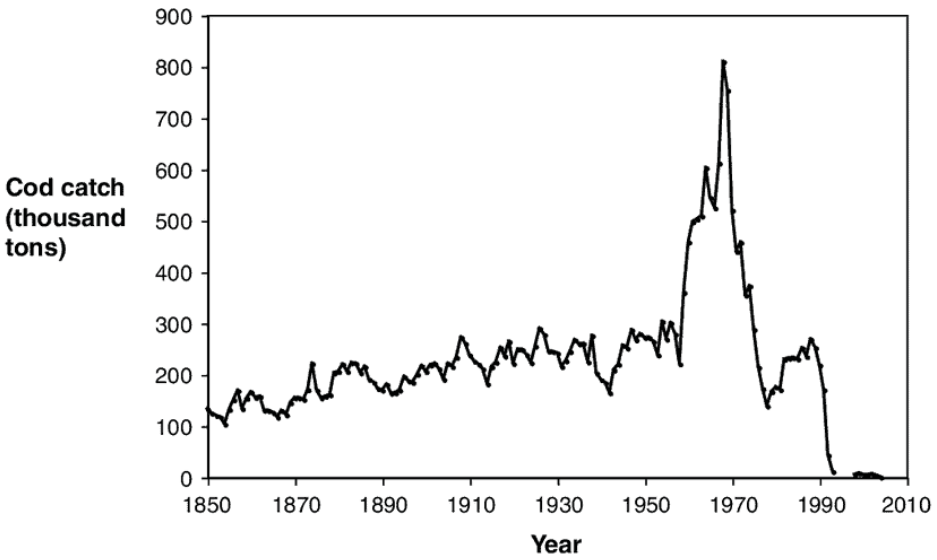
2. Uncertain Value
Shifting business practices to be more environmentally-friendly can be expensive, at least in up-front costs, which makes businesses averse to making necessary changes. It is relatively easy to calculate the savings from buying renewable energy, but not all sustainability solutions are as straight-forward. Changing an entire business supply chain to use more sustainable raw materials or recycle those materials is likely to require a costly initial investment even if it would pay off years later.

3. Reduced Profits
Supporting real sustainability means encouraging customers to consume less. That goal stands in direct contrast to companies' business models, which is to expand and sell more of their products. Furthermore, many consumers do not consistently factor sustainability into their purchase decisions.

4. Collective Problem
The economic problem known as the "tragedy of the commons" posits that people believe if they do not use a natural resource, someone else will, and they will lose out. That mindset leads people (and companies) to deplete valuable resources.

The **tragedy of the commons** is a situation in a shared-resource system where individual users, acting independently according to their own self-interest, behave contrary to the common good of all users by depleting or spoiling the shared resource through their collective action. This problem results in over-consumption, under-investment, and ultimately depletion of a common-pool resource.
The **Grand Banks fishery** off the coast of Newfoundland is a prime example of the tragedy of the commons. For centuries, fishermen described this region as home to an endless supply of codfish. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, advancements in fishing technology allowed fishermen to catch comparatively massive amounts of codfish – which meant that cod fishing was now a rivalrous activity. Each catch left fewer and fewer codfish in the sea. Fishermen started competing with each other to catch increasingly larger amounts of cod, and by 1990, the population of codfish in the region was so low, the entire industry collapsed.

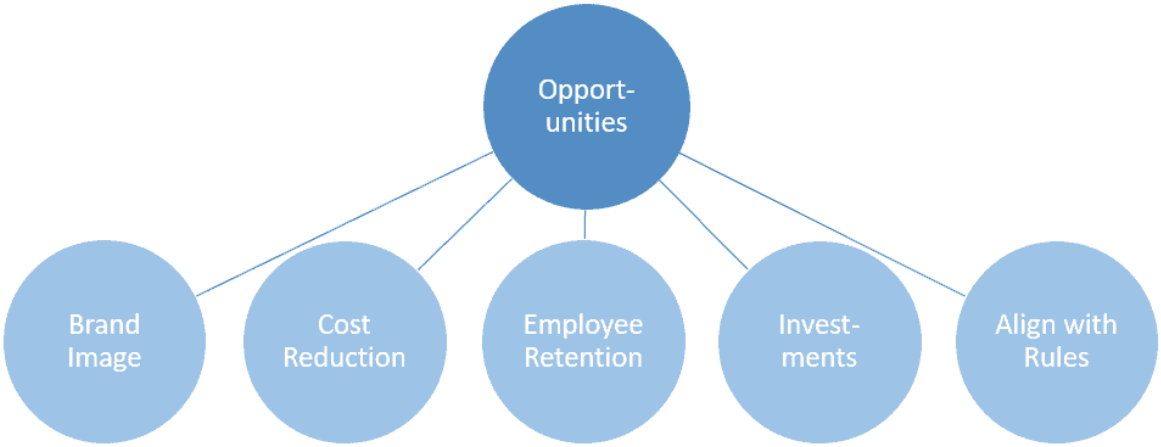
Chart: Codfish catch in Newfoundland



One possible solution is top-down government regulation or direct control of a common-pool resource. In a typical example, governmental regulations can limit the amount of a common good that is available for use by any individual or company.

Opportunities

Businesses practicing sustainability improve their image and reputation, reduce costs, and help boost the local economy, all of which lead to improved business and stronger and healthier local communities for operations. Here are five reasons, why becoming sustainable might be highly beneficial for a company:



1. Improved Brand Image and Competitive Advantage
Being a sustainable business can improve your brand image. Today's customers are more aware of environmental concerns than prior generations. They are likely to buy from the organization that is known

for practicing sustainability. This way, it also helps a company to get a competitive advantage. Spreading awareness and practicing sustainability not only builds up a positive brand image, but also penetrates at a deeper level to employees, their near and dear ones, and beyond.

2. Increased Productivity and Reduced Costs
Through the development of more sustainable business practices, efficiency in operations can increase. With better use and conservation of resources, operations will be streamlined and costs will decrease in the long run.

3. Enhanced Employee Retention
Employees want to work with companies that are proactive with corporate environmental and social programs. They don't want to be associated with the companies involved in ecological disasters and community welfare scandals. By offering sustainable practices, companies can recruit and retain a greater talent pool.

4. Raising Financial and Investments Opportunities
Financial and investment analysts have recognized companies who have developed sustainability plans (with regards to energy efficiency and reduction of environmental impact) are likely to attract investors more than those who don't have.

5. Matching with Government Regulations
Facing the consequences of climate change, global warming, shrinking water resources, and pollution, state and federal government agencies are imposing regulations to save the environment. Incorporating sustainability into corporate practices will help a company to avoid penalties or hefty fines.

The company that seeks to be a sustainable business should understand that sustainability is a company-wide goal that incorporates every aspect of the business and its relationships.

3. Changing World

Businesses that thrive in the future will be those companies that figure out how to place sustainability at the heart of their business strategies. Three major categories of change are transforming what business and sustainability mean: **climate change**, **technology**, and **economic shift**.

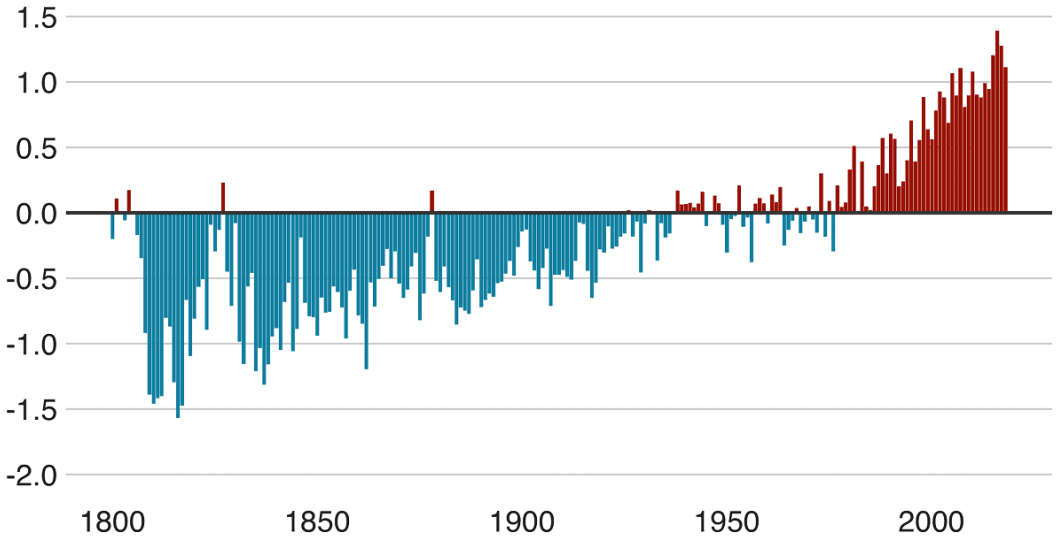
Climate Change

The steady increase in extreme weather confirms that our planet is changing. Humanity has stepped decisively into the ***Anthropocene period*** – the current, relatively recent period of the Earth's history in which humans have irreversibly changed the planet.

Among other things, a warming Earth will disrupt long-standing agricultural patterns, undermine ecosystem health, contribute to the spread of novel pathogens, exacerbate water scarcity, and ratchet up pressure on scarce land. Furthermore, we have to urgently face air, water, soil and solid waste pollution.

The world has been getting warmer

Annual mean land temperature above or below average (°C)



Note: Average is calculated from 1951-1980 land surface temperature data

Source: University of California Berkeley

The Challenge:
The impacts of climate change are being felt today. Extreme weather has introduced new levels of financial, operational, and human vulnerability. Companies need to build resilience in the face of climate change, water scarcity, and related disruptions, both in their own operations, infrastructure, and supply chains, and in the communities in which they operate and invest.

The Opportunity:
Attending to this issue will mitigate risk, ensure business continuity, and involve business in parlaying its skills and knowledge as part of the overall climate solution.

The Uncertainties:
Creating resilience requires broad collaboration for a benefit that cannot be predicted with certainty. Climate resilience efforts will be influenced by many uncertain factors, including the policy landscape, the ability of stakeholders to coordinate, the pace of mitigation efforts, and the development of new technological solutions.

Technology

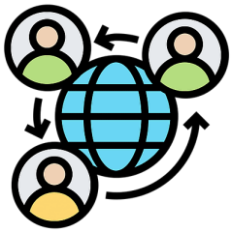
In the past, machines had to be told what to do. Now, a machine can learn what to do. From self-driving cars to facial recognition, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing the world around us and is enabling the creation of powerful new tools to address some of humanity's most pressing challenges.

The Challenge:
New technologies continue to offer world-changing benefits in terms of health, connectedness, efficiency and productivity, transparency, and access. Companies need to develop policies and practices that address big new ethical questions about the application of new technologies. Most companies depend on using personal data and many are exploring the use of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and other technologies, and there is very little agreement on how to apply these tools fairly.

The Opportunity:
Business has much to gain through these innovations, and many technologies can also unlock solutions to climate change and other societal issues. Business also has much to lose if society does not accept these big innovations. Companies have to ensure that technologies are adopted consistent with human rights principles and in a way that contributes to building social consensus so we are all able to capture the benefits of a connected world.

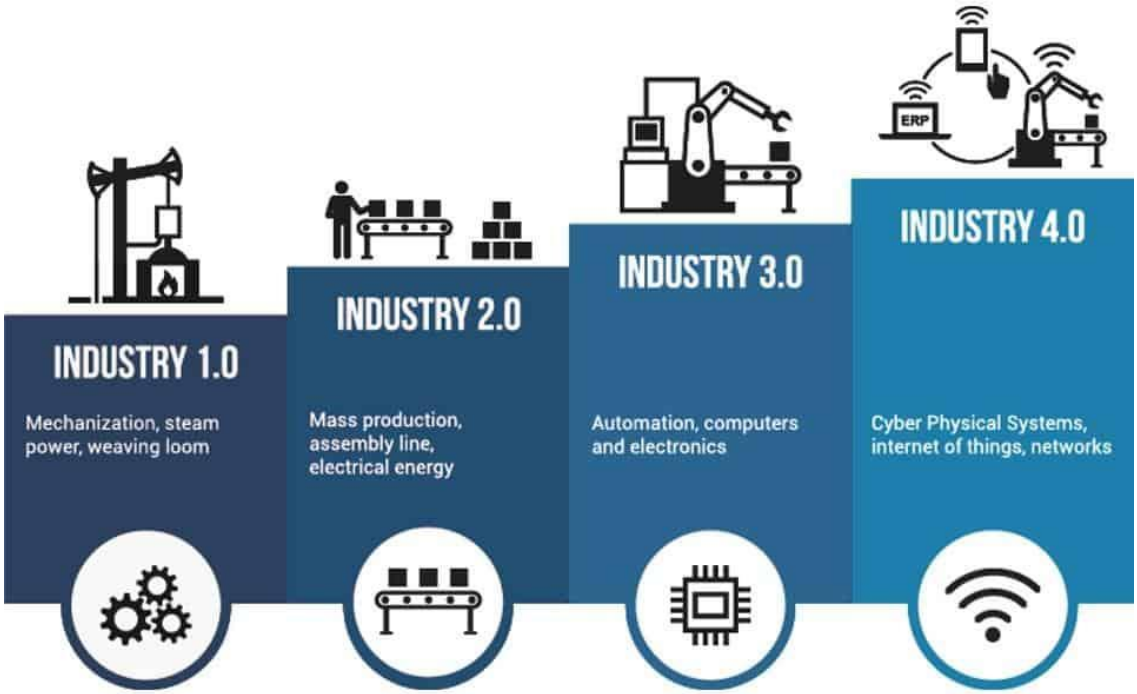
The Uncertainties:
Human rights principles were largely developed 75 years ago, in a very different reality from ours. In addition, technology moves faster than social norms and official regulations. This leaves gaps in our understanding of the implications of technologies that bring profound change and creates strains for a global governance system that is not able to anticipate and address new technologies. Additional uncertainty exists around the potential capabilities of artificial intelligence and how quickly these will be developed and deployed.

Economic Shift



For 2020 to 2035, the global population is projected to add one billion more people. The scale of basic human needs to be met – to be fed, clothed, sheltered, educated, moved around, meaningfully employed, and cared for – is far greater than what we deliver today.

This constitutes an enormous opportunity for those who see it as such, and new technologies and business models are emerging that make it more feasible to meet these needs sustainably. However, it remains to be seen whether business and government are up to the task – and, if they're not, how humanity will respond.



The Challenge

Today, we are at the dawn of an economic transition as profound, or more profound, than the transition from an agricultural economy to the industrial world. This new world – especially when coupled with a global

economy experiencing fundamental demographic change – means that the need to generate quality employment in an era of automation is essential.

The Opportunity
Automation presents opportunities to increase efficiency on a massive scale while improving work safety and other benefits. Business has much to gain if it develops a clear vision of what it can do to generate quality employment and participates in a broader discussion about a social contract fit for the 21st century.

The Uncertainties
For the first time since the industrial revolution, labor and economic productivity appear to be de-linked. How the quest for inclusive growth plays out in the coming years will be shaped by critical uncertainties – including the capabilities of automation, government intervention to shore up social safety nets, the ability of educational systems to keep pace with change, and the potential growth of alternative economic models.

4. ABC Framework

The ABC (act – build – change) framework provides a blueprint for putting sustainability at the center of business strategy, governance, and management. It enables companies to play their full part in the creation of a just and sustainable world.

The New Frame

The world around us is changing more rapidly than ever before. Now the era of isolated sustainability strategies needs to end; the creation of

business strategies that take sustainability as their foundation needs to begin.

Few companies are born with a broad-based commitment to sustainability. To develop one, companies need leadership commitment, an ability to engage with multiple stakeholders along the value chain, widespread employee engagement, and disciplined mechanisms for execution.

A growing number of companies are taking notice of these shifts and have come to consider sustainability-related strategies necessary to be competitive. Studies show that “highly sustainable” companies significantly outperformed their counterparts in terms of both stock market and accounting criteria.

The transformation towards sustainable business and the economic shift towards sustainability will be most effective if the process is based upon an “act, build, change” approach to company strategy, governance, and management. This “act, build, contribute” framework is our blueprint for the future of sustainable business.

A

Act: Companies can act within their own company boundaries to support sustainability by improving their strategies, government, and management systems.

B

Build: Companies can build beneficial relationships with others by collaboration with external stakeholders and transparent reporting mechanisms.

C

Change: Companies can change the status quo beyond their own company boundaries by promoting policies, influencing regulation, and advocating for sustainable business.

The ABC framework was originally introduced by BSR (Business for Social Responsibility) in 2018 and developed further by E_CIS (European Center for Innovation and Sustainability). The new frame provides a blueprint for putting sustainability at the center of business enabling companies to play their full part in the creation of a just and sustainable world.

A – Act

A

Companies can **act** within their own company boundaries to support sustainability by developing new business strategies, improve governance structures, and implement leadership approaches that respond to the rapidly-shifting world.

- **Strategy**: Companies need to create resilient business strategies that take sustainability as their foundation. They also need to emphasize long-term value creation and find ways to move beyond short-term performance pressures that can prevent progress on sustainability. In many ways, sustainability issues and business issues have converged: Sustainable business is often better business, and a sustainable future is a better future. Sustainability makes us more innovative, more flexible, and more resilient.
- **Governance**: Boards and senior executives have the expertise, insights, and information necessary to plan for a sustainable future over the long term, while also overseeing sustainability performance today. To achieve this, companies could align incentives (like executive compensation) to sustainability performance, recruit board members with sustainability expertise, and provide training on material sustainability issues.
- **Leadership**: The creation and implementation of resilient business strategies will require new types of executive leadership that support organizational leadership on sustainability issues. Structures, processes, and relationships exist that make sustainability an essential part of company decision-making and operations, built upon an ethical organizational culture that sustains integrity and supports sustainability innovation. As of today, leaders to be value creators (identifying opportunities to create business value), futurists (evaluating long-term risks and opportunities), change agents (supporting organizational change), and coalition builders (connecting innovative departments).

What does this mean for your company?

- Create resilient business strategies that view progress on sustainability as a means of long-term value creation and innovation.
- Conduct scenario planning and strategic foresight.
- Recruit board members with expertise relevant to sustainability.
- Frame sustainability as an opportunity for growth and value creation.

B – Build

Companies can **build** beneficial relationships with others to strengthen sustainability beyond their own company boundaries by collaboration with external stakeholders and introducing transparent reporting mechanisms.

- **Collaboration**: Innovation in stakeholder engagement supports the development of more inclusive societies. A sustainable business should be able to analyze the broader environment in which it operates, with an understanding that the company is just one actor in a wider social system that is linked to, and dependent on, external actors. To succeed, a business is required to look at all actors, including commercial actors (such as suppliers, business partners, and customers) as well as noncommercial actors (such as governments, communities, and users), and considering their relationships with each other.
- **Reporting**: There is a broad range of audiences for sustainability information: Investors want information that is material for investment decisions, but other important stakeholders – such as civil society organizations, employees, or policy makers – may have different priorities and information needs. Companies can fulfill the purpose of sustainability reporting by deploying different types of information at different report users.

What does this mean for your company?

- Develop stakeholder relationships that support your new business strategies.

- Use stakeholder relationships as a source of innovation.
- Target different reports at different audiences.
- Experiment with how to apply different reporting standards simultaneously.

C – Change

Companies can **change** the status quo beyond their own company boundaries by promoting sustainable policy frameworks, influencing regulation, and advocating for sustainable business.

- **Regulation**: Businesses can influence company law and regulation. They should support regulatory frameworks and rules for due diligence and disclosure that drive sustainable business.
- **Advocating**: The essence of sustainable business is ensuring positive outcomes for society, and the business voice in critical debates is an important tool that companies have at their disposal. It is essential that business leaders become more effective at connecting sustainability challenges with priorities that resonate with the public.

What does this mean for your company?

- Influence future legal frameworks through leadership by example.
- Use the business voice to advocate for policy frameworks that support resilient business.
- Demonstrate the potential for sustainability to generate economic benefit for all.

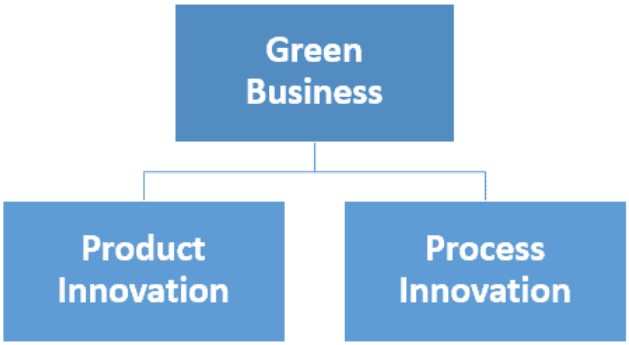
5. Green Business

This course focuses on the combined three-dimensional social, environmental, and economic impacts of a sustainable business. In this chapter, however, we will talk about businesses that focus exclusively on their environmental impact, which is also referred to as a **green business**.

Going Green

The concept of “green business” is composed of two elements – “green” and “business”. Like a regular business, green business is also about earning profit. But “green” means doing so while sustainably harnessing opportunities that nature holds, and without harming the environment.

Green business can be defined from two perspectives: one relates to the **output** in the form of green products or services, while the other relates to the **process** of economic activity. This means entrepreneurs can enter the “green business” sector by either providing environmentally friendly products/services or through an environmentally friendly process.



- Green businesses may offer products or services that are explicitly green (Example: a renewable energy company involved in the manufacturing, installation, and servicing of solar panels to generate electricity instead of generating it from non-renewable sources).
- Green businesses may offer mainstream products and services, but use green operations (Example: a clothes manufacturing company that uses organic cotton and filters its waste-water for reuse).

While a step-by-step approach of gradual greening is usually most practical, ideally, as the business matures, both its outputs as well as processes should become green.

On the next pages, we will highlight the three important stages of developing a green business.

Generating a Business Idea

Green entrepreneurs are involved in the production of environmentally friendly products and services or make use of processes that are environmentally friendly. Green entrepreneurs – like any other entrepreneurs – need to possess certain characteristics to be successful. These characteristics include passion, goal-orientation, decision-making, risk-taking, ability to handle stress, ability to access to social support, financial endowment, and business management skills.

In addition to these general characteristics, green entrepreneurs need to think about the planet and its people along with profit, so some further characteristics are required. A green entrepreneur needs to be:

- **Analytical** – As the green sector is relatively new, entrepreneurs venturing into it need to be able to analyze the potential for success and failure and plan accordingly.
- **Innovative** – Green entrepreneurs need to be able to “think outside the box” and come up with new solutions to address environmental problems.
- **Committed to ethical standards** – A green entrepreneur needs to think about profit, but also about people and the planet (the 3 “P”s) when making business decisions.

Your green idea is the starting point for your green business. Ways of coming up with business ideas include learning from business people, drawing from your own and other people’s experiences, surveying your local business area, scanning your environment, and structured and unstructured brainstorming. A green business idea can relate to either a green product or a green service, or it can relate to a “standard” product or service, but which is produced or delivered in a green way.

Once you have come up with your business idea, consider the following issues:

Executive Summary	The executive summary is an outline of your green business idea. In addition to the generic issues covered in a business plan, the summary should highlight its green dimensions.

- To what extent does the business depend on the surrounding natural environment (soil, wood, charcoal, fish, wind, sun, water, etc.)?
- Will the business have a positive impact on the environment (clean the water, improve the soil, etc.)?
- Will the business affect the environment in any negative way?

Remember that even if your main motivation is to help overcome an environmental problem, you cannot only think about the environmental dimensions when assessing your idea. It is equally important to assess the economic dimensions such as whether there will be sufficient demand for the product or service.

Developing a Business Plan

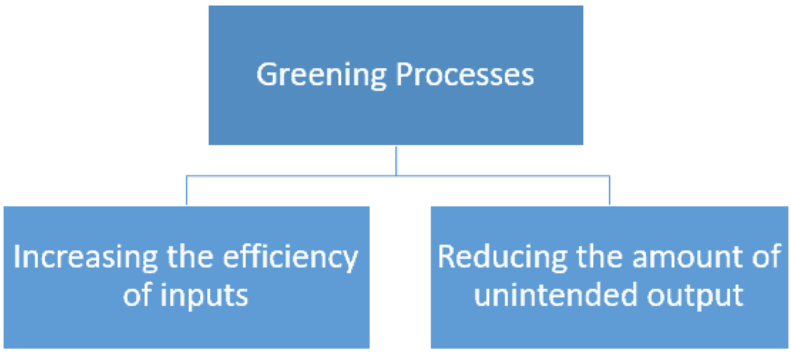
In order to launch a business, you need to develop a business plan. A business plan is a document setting out a business's future objectives and strategies for achieving them.

The development of the plan is not an overnight process and may take several weeks or months to complete. The business plan for your green business should cover all the aspects to be considered before starting the business. Here we will highlight the most important **business plan components** and describe their purpose:

Business Idea	All business plans are based on an idea. In describing your idea, you need to highlight what makes it unique as a green business (in terms of the product/service or process).
Marketing Plan	Your marketing plan needs to be based on a solid understanding of the market. Once you know your market, you need to develop a marketing plan based on the "4 marketing Ps": **Product**: What goods or services you are going to offer to satisfy the customers' needs? **Price**: How much are you going to charge your customers for your goods or services? **Place**: How and where will you offer your products or services? **Promotion**: How do you attract customers to make a purchase?
Staff	You will need to decide what your business' staffing needs are based on what tasks need to be performed. When assessing what staff you need, consider whether any additional technical skills are needed for your green product/service.
Organisation	Like any entrepreneur, you will need to decide on the form of business. A green business can take one of many forms, including a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or a cooperative, for example. You should weigh the pros and cons of each before choosing the best form.
Inventory	Your business will need to buy before you make or sell your products/services. When buying for your business, consider how environmentally friendly the materials or equipment you buy are.
Financial Planning	You need to be able to plan and monitor the financial situation of your business using tools such as the profit plan and a cash flow plan. Like any other business, your green business needs to perform financially, otherwise, you will not be able to keep it going.

Greening the Processes

Greening processes refers to the transformation of the business/production processes of your enterprise in order for it to become a green business. Every enterprise can green its operations and processes. There are two dimensions to this. On the one hand, it concerns the inputs required and on the other hand, it concerns the unintended output or waste and pollution.



So, greening your processes aims both at:

- Increasing the efficiency of inputs used in the enterprise (reducing the use of energy, material, and water while increasing or maintaining the same level of product or service delivery).
- Reducing the amount of unintended output (reducing waste, pollution, and the excessive destruction of natural resources).

Here are some tips on how to make the processes of a business greener:

- **Pay attention to your raw materials:** When selecting your raw materials, think sustainable. This may mean organic, biodegradable, recyclable or renewable. Organic agricultural products, biodegradable plastic, or wood from sustainable forestry are examples of raw materials that make your business footprint greener.
- **Green your energy and water consumption:** Your business is likely to require energy and/or water. You can go green by using energy from renewable sources such as solar energy, and by using harvested rainwater, for example. You can also reduce your energy consumption by making use of more energy-efficient equipment.
- **Minimize your emissions:** Switch to fuels that are as green as possible and use equipment that produces the smallest amount of emissions possible. Sometimes a switch from a diesel generator to an electric machine reduces costs while cleaning the local air.
- **Reduce, reuse and recycle waste:** Reduce by using as little as possible. Reuse whatever can be reused. For waste that you can't reuse yourself or provide to others for reuse, give it in for recycling. Finally, for waste that cannot be reused or recycled, dispose of it in a responsible way.

- **Transport responsibly:** Minimize distances used for transport, reduce weight and volume through efficient packaging options, avoid less than full loads, plan efficient journeys, and when transporting, choose the least environmentally harmful options available. Also think of sharing transport with others when possible.
- **Think outside of the box:** Use your creativity to make a profit while helping the environment. Eco-entrepreneurs tend to be innovators. Sometimes, sophisticated technologies, scientific expertise or a large amount of money are needed to make an innovative idea a reality. But sometimes you can also use resources that are already available in your community and transform them to make a profit. For example, you may have heard of innovative ideas such as eco-coolers made from discarded plastic bottles, or cups and plates made from coffee grinds.

Sustainability SWOT

The **Sustainability SWOT Analysis** (sSWOT) is based on the standard SWOT analysis – an established business tool used to evaluate a company's competitive position by analyzing its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

The sSWOT is a new, green version of the traditional tool. It helps companies identify and assess environmental risks and to drive action on environmental challenges. This way, the sSWOT can also be useful to initiate new sustainable products and business ideas.

In the following example, you can see how a sSWOT matrix for a company may look like:

STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
Conventional strengths High-revenue product	**Green strengths** Energy & material efficient production process can decrease costs and increase profits	**Conventional weaknesses** Lack of skilled labour	**Green weaknesses** Lack of knowhow to produce innovative products (e.g. solar panels) needed for the idea
OPPORTUNITIES		**THREATS**	
Conventional opportunities Upcoming market for this product	**Green opportunities** Large consumer base for eco-friendly & healthy products	**Conventional threats** Cheaper product available in the market	**Green threats** Government subsidies for competing, non-green products

The sSWOT is designed to help drive action and collaboration on environmental challenges, creating business risks and opportunities. sSWOT helps individuals engage and motivate colleagues – particularly those with limited knowledge of environmental issues or corporate sustainability.

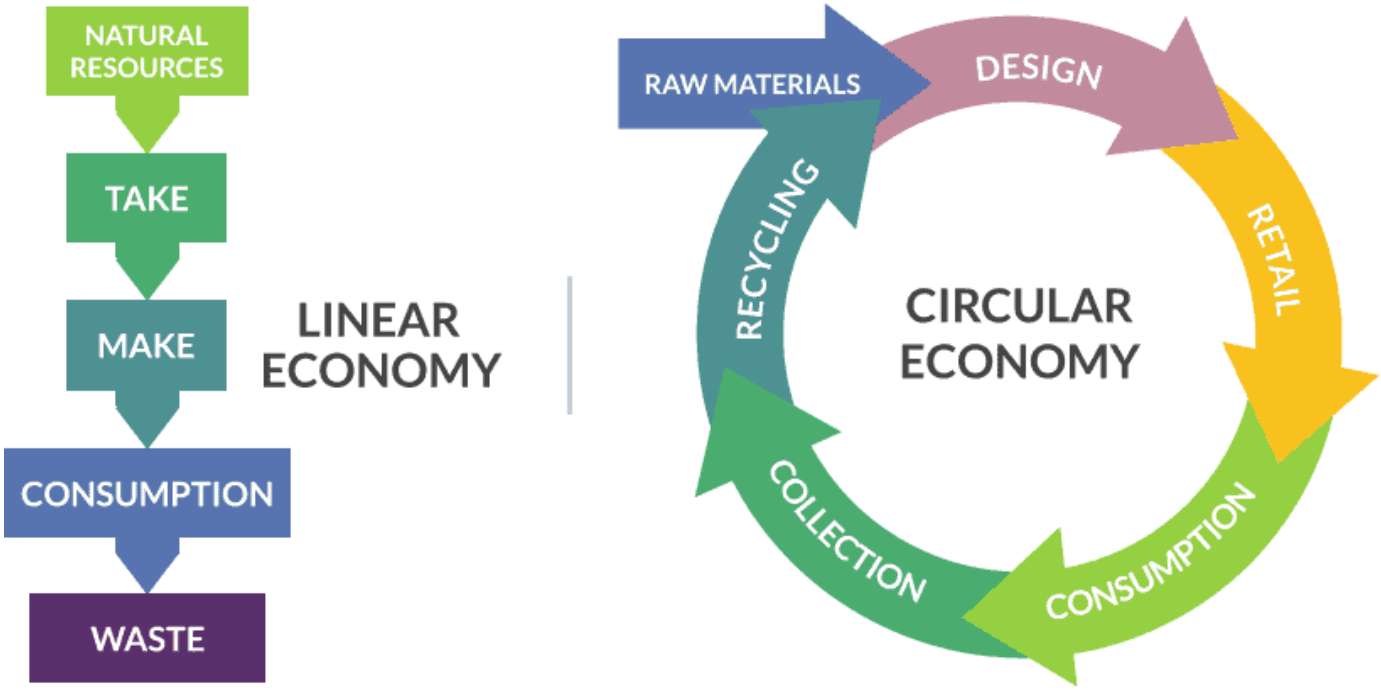
Companies can use this analysis to work across internal departments – as well as with suppliers, customers or other stakeholders – on strategies to create and sustain long-term value.

6. Circular Economy

A **circular economy** is an economic system aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources. Circular systems employ reuse, sharing, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing, and recycling to create a closed-loop system, minimizing the use of resource inputs, the creation of waste, and pollution.

The circular economy aims to keep products, equipment, and infrastructure in use for longer, thus improving the productivity of these resources.

Transitioning from a linear economy to a circular economy does not only amount to adjustments aimed at reducing the negative impacts of the linear economy. Rather, it represents a systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates business and economic opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits.



Many different definitions of the circular economy are used in scientific literature and professional journals. However, most definitions focus on the use of materials. These definitions often follow the **3R approach**:

- **Reduce** (minimum use of raw materials)
- **Reuse** (maximum reuse of products and components)
- **Recycle** (high-quality reuse of raw materials)

Mobility can serve as a good example: Car sharing means that fewer people have to buy their own cars. This reduces the use of raw materials (reduce). If the engine of a car is broken, it can be repaired or the chassis and interior of the car can be used to make or refurbish another car (reuse). When these parts can no longer be reused, the metal, textile, and plastic of the parts can be melted down so that a new car can be made of them (recycling).

In a circular economy, economic activity builds and rebuilds overall system health. The concept recognizes the importance of the economy needing to work effectively at all scales – for large and small businesses, for organizations and individuals, globally and locally.

7. Example: Patagonia

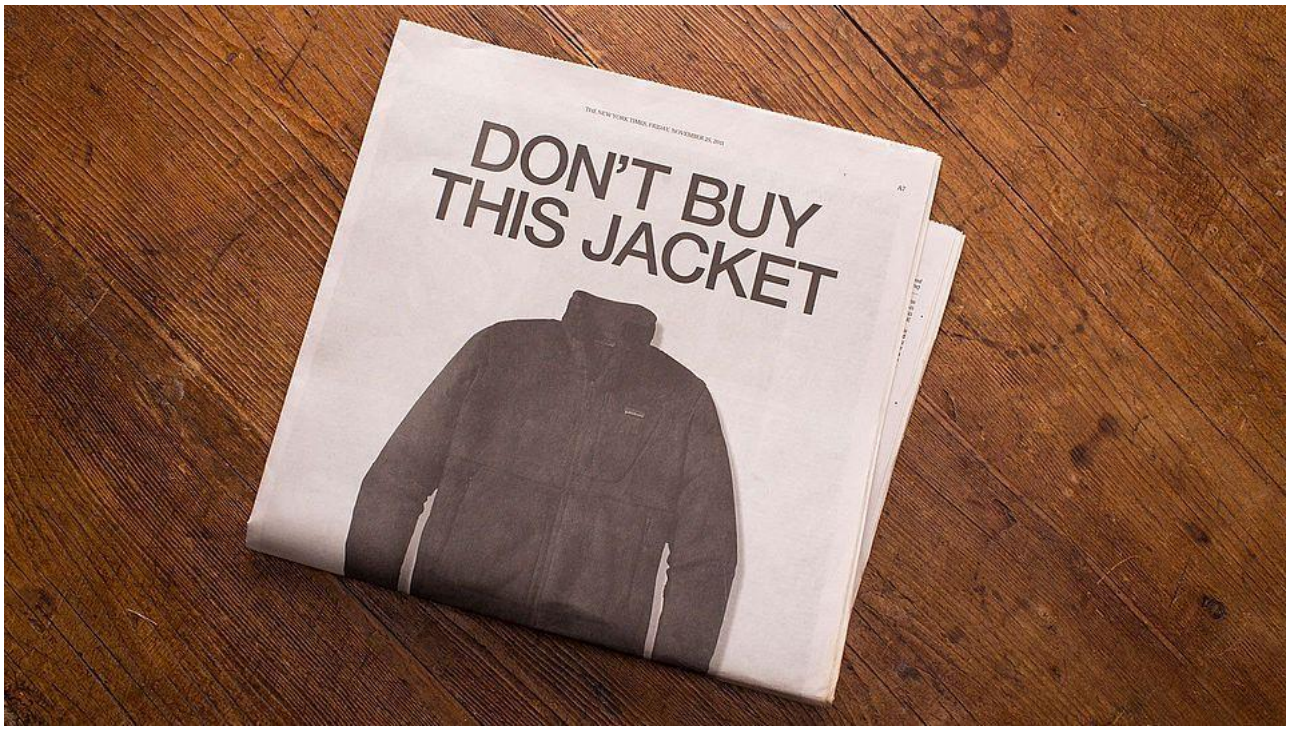
Patagonia is an American clothing company that markets and sells outdoor clothing. Patagonia is the leading example of a successful social impact company with consistently high ratings for sustainability leadership and high profitability.

Patagonia's business model is manufacturing and selling high-quality outdoor clothing products both through distributors and direct to consumers. The business model also focuses on creating social and economic value through its business. Impact and environmentalism is part of the Patagonia brand identity. Patagonia's mission is to "Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis."

Patagonia inserts initiatives for impact and social responsibility. Also, the company's product design and branding emphasize the values and ethics of the founding vision. Here are some examples:

- **Reporting as a Benefit Corp (B-Corp)**: Patagonia became a B-Corp in 2012 in California, as soon as it was possible in that state. Becoming a B-Corp allows socially and environmentally committed companies to write those values into their articles of incorporation, and more generally holds companies accountable to impact metrics beyond simply financial gain.
- **1% For the Planet Initiative**: Patagonia has pledged 1% of revenues to go to nonprofit charities that promote sustainability and conservation. This further emphasizes its focus on environmental impact.
- **Worn Wear Initiative**: The initiative emphasizes the ability to repair clothing while highlighting Patagonia's durability. Patagonia staff drove around the United States to repair clothes, including non-Patagonia clothing.
- **Anti-Consumerism Marketing**: The business markets and advertises against buying products to promote sustainability and promote the values of Patagonia. A famous add read "Don't Buy

This Jacket." Patagonia has pushed back against consumer trends like Black Friday as well, hoping that consumers will spend more on fewer, more durable products.



In an age where consumers are more aware of and interested in the impact businesses have on the world, Patagonia's business model which emphasizes sustainability is well-positioned to continue to capture loyal, impact-driven customers.

8. Conclusion

Today, companies must choose whether to start the journey to become sustainable or to continue to do 'business as usual'. Although each company must make that choice for itself, changing social and investor expectations will only increase the pressure to adopt the sustainable model.

Doing so requires strong leadership commitment, without which the journey cannot begin. In re-framing its identity, the company must learn

to engage openly with external stakeholders. Maintaining transparency without recourse to defensive strategies is integral to a sustainable strategy. As this strategy is implemented through broad-based employee engagement and disciplined mechanisms for execution, a new identity can emerge: that of a sustainable company.

A helpful guide for this challenge is the ABC framework. This frame provides a blueprint for putting sustainability at the center of business to enable companies to play their full part in the creation of a just and sustainable world.

In many parts of the world, societies are growing more fragmented, and the rapid pace of change is increasing a sense of disconnection for many people. Often, governments are slow to adapt to changing conditions. It is crucial that companies advocate for outcomes that leverage all of the changes we are discussing for broad social benefit.

Business will have the platform to play this role only if it champions an agenda that resonates with the public, and only if it is seen to be acting for the benefit of the greater good – for reasons that go beyond short-term financial gain. The payoff for business is substantial: the opportunity to help build support for progress on crucial issues, the creation of a more predictable operating environment, and, ideally, the restoration of trust.

1. Introduction

Crises can neither be avoided nor accurately predicted. When they occur, the community rightly expects that the response of their leadership will minimize harm to life and limb, restore important operations and processes, and ensure that the situation will go back to ‘normal’ as soon as possible.

Crisis management is the process by which an organisation deals with a major event that threatens to harm the organization, its stakeholders, or

the general public. The study of crisis management originated with the large-scale industrial and environmental disasters in the 1980s.

This course explores how governmental organizations as well as private companies around the globe have prepared for crises, how they responded when they occurred, and whether they learned from the experience. It is clear from many other organisations that good preparation and training, both individual and institutional, can help prevent a crisis from becoming a disaster.

We hope that this course will encourage professionals, companies and public organizations to review their own crisis preparations.

2. Definition

Crises can occur in many forms. They may have a sudden arrival and a swift conclusion, such as hijackings and bushfires, or they may be slow to develop and conclude, such as global warming or deforestation. In this chapter, we want to discuss definitions and introduce the Crisis Management Cycle.

What is a Crisis?

Natural disasters, economic recessions, political conflicts – today, crises seem to appear everywhere around the globe. Most people link crisis to extreme danger, instability, stress, and uncertainty. However, if we want to manage crises effectively we have to build and use a common terminology. So is there a better crisis definition?

A **crisis** is a change – which may be sudden or which may take some time to evolve – that results in an urgent problem with a high level of uncertainty that must be addressed immediately.
A crisis can occur in many forms. For example as a result of natural disasters such as floods or storms, socio-political forces such as terrorism or computer hacking or business causes such as the financial

meltdown of an organisation or sector. Incidents such as leaking of sensitive personal data by government agents, management misconduct (e.g. leader's private life, extravagant fringe benefits), or deception (e.g. hiding or providing false information) can also turn into crises.

Crises may have a sudden arrival and a swift conclusion, such as hijackings and bushfires, or they may be slow to develop and conclude, such as global warming or deforestation.

There is also the question of deciding when something is a crisis, and when the government should intervene. In many cases, there are no hard and fast rules or clear cut procedures for determining a crisis.

Levels of Crises

Crises may be of differing scales, dimensions and types. A three-level categorization of crises can be helpful in thinking about crises and how to manage them:

1. **Level 1 Crisis** refers to a crisis within an organisation or section which can be resolved within the resources of the organisation and which has a limited impact outside of the organisation.

2. **Level 2 Crisis** refers to a major incident which involves several organisations and/or impacts on a sizeable part of the community. Multiple resources are needed and there are impacts outside of the organisations involved.

3. **Level 3 Crisis** refers to a catastrophic emergency event which involves a whole region or sizeable part of the community. Resolution is beyond the application of local resources and the impacts are large scale and system-wide.

In this course, our main focus is on level 2 and 3 crises. Steps taken to deal with smaller-scale crises within an organisation or section are normally similar to those required in larger crises. The main difference is that cross-cutting teams or initiatives are less needed, and actions regarding preparation, management and evaluation can be managed within the organisation. But the same actions described in this course, such as the need for crisis planning, effective leadership and clear communications, still apply whatever the scale of the crisis.

Crises may also appear and disappear relatively quickly, with sudden arrival and conclusion, such as hostage-taking, heatwaves or bush fires.

Alternatively, crises may be slower to emerge, giving more time to prepare, and slower to conclude, leaving longer-term issues for organisations and society to deal with.

Crisis Management Cycle

Crises are not the normal ups and downs of an economic cycle or organisational routines, those recurring problems faced in the course of taking risks and exploring new opportunities. Consequently, crisis management can be seen as complementary to and acting in conjunction with business practices such as risk management and business continuity management. But it is also important to be aware that crisis management doesn't start when a crisis arises and ends when the crisis is over. Crisis management requires actions **before** a crisis happens, **while** the crisis is unfolding, and **after** the crisis has ended.

Crisis management has always been a feature of good public management. But in recent years national and international events and the impacts of globalisation in areas such as pandemics, climate change and terror attacks have raised the importance of good crisis management. Public leaders have a particular responsibility to help safeguard society from the adverse consequences of a crisis. When these responses go wrong, the crisis can escalate.

But when the crisis is managed well, the impact of the crisis can be minimised. Some crises demand fast and effective government responses, as their scale is beyond the handling capability of individual agencies or groups of departments. Other crises can require inputs from non-government organisations and agencies, and the local and/or international community. On this latter point, there is often a need for the public sector to coordinate the actions of non-government organisations and individuals during all the phases of a crisis.

A useful way of understanding the demands of crisis management on public managers is to think of crisis management in terms of different phases of a cycle, as displayed below. The three phases of the Crisis Management Cycle are:

- **Preparation:** Dealing with issues such as planning, simulations and training.
- **Management:** Dealing with issues such as allocation of resources, command systems and communications.

- **Evaluation:** Dealing with issues such as post-crisis lesson learning, debriefing and accountability.

Of course in reality there is an overlap between these phases. But the cycle process provides a useful mechanism for thinking through the actions needed for effective crisis management, as the following sections of the course will show.

3. Preparation

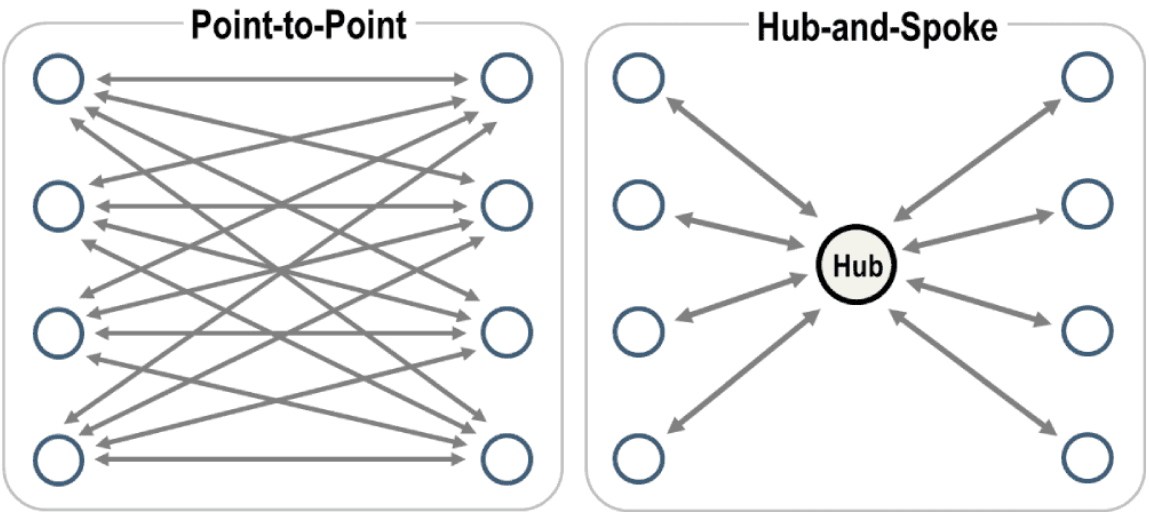
In the **preparation phase**, there are a number of issues to be addressed: Putting in place supportive crisis management architecture, planning to inform actions, and conducting crisis exercises to identify existing strengths and weaknesses are three key issues in crisis management preparation.

Architecture

It is increasingly common practice for a crisis management structure to be created to oversee and coordinate crisis management. National crisis management structures are often supported by a crisis management

center, as this example of the coordination and crisis center from Belgium illustrates:

The Belgian **Governmental Coordination and Crisis Centre**, located in the Ministry of the Interior, was established to assist the federal government in the planning and interdepartmental management of crises and major events. Nationally, it has responsibility for matters such as risk analysis and emergency planning; planning, coordination and follow-up of major events (events at risk); and infrastructure and organisation for crisis management. Internationally, it is the contact point for international centres such as Ecurie (nuclear alert system), BICHAT (biological and chemical attacks and threats) and EMSC (European Mediterranean seismological centre). It has responsibility for the drawing up of cooperation procedures with other departments and/or provincial, national and international institutions.
Crisis management architecture needs to ensure effective command and control. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, over 1,500 people died and tens of thousands were left without basic supplies. The response to Katrina featured neither an effective network nor an effective hierarchy. It lacked a clear command and positive working relationships among key actors. The capacity of the network was also weakened, in large part due to the capacity weaknesses of its hubs, especially the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Hub agencies need to have high capacity and adequate resources.



The use of effective ‘hub’ agencies and associated ‘spoke’ agencies is a model which, when effectively resourced, has been shown to work well. **Hub agencies** take the lead in coordinating responses and are seen as the central authorities with particular expertise and capacity in crisis preparation and management. **Spoke agencies** are other

participants whose input is crucial to the overall success of crisis management which have individual areas of responsibility that may overlap with others and which are coordinated by the hub.

Planning

By their nature, most crises are unpredictable as to when they will occur and to what degree. But it is possible to determine activities and areas that may be particularly prone to crises and where crisis management is particularly needed. **Planning** in these areas can contribute to prevention as well as preparation.

It is important in these circumstances to keep under scrutiny the changing type, likelihood and severity of potential crises. Of course, some crises cannot be planned for, particularly where they take a new or previously unknown form.

But many crises arise from predictable events and planning can help ensure effective action is taken in these circumstances. It is the process of planning and the preparation for eventualities more so than the plans themselves that is vital to effective crisis management.

A **Crisis Management Plan (CMP)** is a document that describes the processes that an organization should use to respond to a critical situation that could adversely affect its profitability, reputation or ability to operate. With regard to the development and contents of a crisis management plan itself, all crisis management plans should include:

- People involved and their tasks,
- Methods for identifying crises,
- Methods for involving management,
- Lines of communication,
- Mechanisms for reporting,
- Process for decision making,
- Equipment, facilities and occupation of crisis management center, as well as
- Levels of control and authority limits.

An important element of planning is preparing for different crisis scenarios. Even with known crises, such as pandemic outbreaks, the nature, type, speed, size and scope of the outbreak may vary considerably. In such circumstances, the development of different scenarios can help determine the most effective crisis response.

The **Emergency Management Act 2005** governed emergency management and organisation in **Western Australia (WA)**. The Act set out the hazards that agencies must prepare for including cyclones, fire, floods, air and rail crashes, hazardous materials spills and human and animal epidemics. It allocated the responsibility for their management to a number of hazard management agencies (HMAs).

However, an audit revealed that there was no formal process for regularly reviewing and deciding which hazards the state should prepare. For example, there was no plan for energy or gas shortages. This indicated the need for periodic scrutiny and updating of potential crisis situations.

Exercises

Simulation exercises provide important training and testing for people who will be involved in managing an actual crisis. As with all aspects of crisis management preparation, they do not provide ready-made answers. Crises are chaotic and unpredictable, and simulation exercises, however life-like, can never fully prepare organisations.

Exercises are nevertheless an important element in good crisis management and can contribute to more effective actions and decision making. There are two main types of crisis exercise:

- **Discussion-based exercises** include seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises and gaming. Such exercises can be relatively cost-effective and particularly useful as an initial introduction for personnel to crisis situations and as a way of thinking about new and emerging threats. Gaming exercises bring elements of stress and increased realism.
- **Operations-based exercises** include drills, functional and full-scale exercises. Functional exercises involve one or more agencies and focus on testing one aspect of crisis response, such as emergency medical services in the event of a terrorist attack. Full-scale exercises involve testing all major functions and responders in a situation as close as possible to a real crisis situation. These exercises are hands-on in real-time and can be highly realistic. They are particularly useful for preparing for larger-scale crises involving many agencies and where significant numbers are affected. They can also be very expensive, both financially and in terms of personnel resources and time.

In California, the **"Golden Guardian Exercise Series"** is an annual training exercise used to develop, conduct, and assess state-wide preparedness for a variety of crises. The exercise aims to coordinate the activities of all levels of government, first responders, volunteer organisations and the private sector in response to potential acts of terrorism and catastrophic disasters. For example, there were exercises regarding terror attacks (2010), a catastrophic earthquake (2013), a tsunami (2014) or cyber-attacks (2017). The goal of the Golden Guardian Exercise Series is to continually improve emergency preparedness capacity by building from the lessons learned from the exercises.

Assessment

With regard to planning and the conduct of crisis exercises, in terms of assessing the preparedness of organisations for crisis management, a typology of organisational preparedness enables managers to rate their own organisation's preparedness, as illustrated in the following example of an **Crisis-Preparedness Matrix**:

	PREPAREDNESS		
	low	medium / mixed	high
Importance of crisis planning for the organisation	Little or no importance. Not an item for serious consideration.	Fairly important on occasion, but normally of less priority than routine organisational goals.	Very high. Crisis preparedness part of the core goals of the organisation.
Attitude to threats	Dismissive. 'It couldn't happen here' mentality.	Fairly serious consideration. A range of threats recognised and planned for.	Very serious consideration. Organisation gives high priority to planning for a range of threats.
Extent of crisis planning	None at all, or at best ignored with little or no awareness by staff.	Fairly detailed and extensive planning as an add-on to existing practice.	Very detailed and extensive crisis planning, permeating the structures, practices and culture of the organisation.
Extent of active readiness through trials and simulation	Non-existent.	None or patchy. Plans on paper are considered adequate.	Highly active readiness through regular crisis training and exercises.

Such an assessment of crisis preparedness can serve a useful purpose for managers to help determine areas of existing **good practice** and **poor practice**. This in turn can help highlight areas that are in need of attention and where actions need to be taken to improve the situation.

For example, if the assessment shows that there is only limited preparedness through the use of trials and simulations, this could indicate the need for the conduct of or participation in a crisis exercise.

4. Management

There is a difference between planning for a crisis and actually dealing with a crisis. The **management phase** deals with issues such as clear

structures and a fitting command system, the role of leadership, communications, and the use of modern technologies.

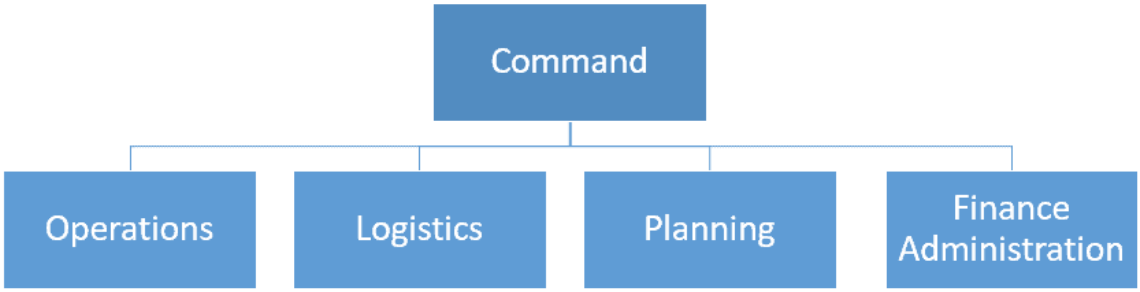
Clear Structures

There is a real-life tension between preparing for a crisis and actually dealing with a crisis. The more complex a plan is, the more likely it is to be ignored in an actual crisis as no one has the time to go through it in detail. Often, responses to crises need to be thought out on the spot, though guided by previous thinking and practice.

To address such issues, crisis planning often aims to identify lines of authority, roles and responsibilities and means of coordination, leaving key individuals with a significant amount of autonomy to act as appropriate to the circumstances.

While the flexibility of response is important, so is the need for clear structures when managing a crisis. Lessons from the USA during and after the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 show the benefits that an effective **Incident Command System (ICS)** can bring and how its absence can cause problems.

An ICS essentially creates a simple command and control system within which staff from different agencies should be placed. It imposes a hierarchy on a network. Structurally, the ICS organises functions by critical management systems: planning, operations, logistics, and administration/finance. Each function reports to a single commander who has decision-making power for the ICS. The basic structure of an ICS is illustrated below:



An effective ICS is particularly helpful where crises require a response from a network of organisations and where there is potential for confusion as to lines of command given the number of different players involved.

As with all aspects of crisis management, however, such standardized reporting and operating procedures need constant reviewing to ensure that they are being used effectively and not creating additional problems of their own. Where the crisis involves a sharp discontinuity with past events and is towards the unknown end of the scale, there is a danger that standardization can limit flexible responses that need to be developed. Standardisation can encourage sticking with 'tried and tested' ways of doing things rather than encouraging the un-learning of failed activities in a situation that requires new thinking.

Leadership

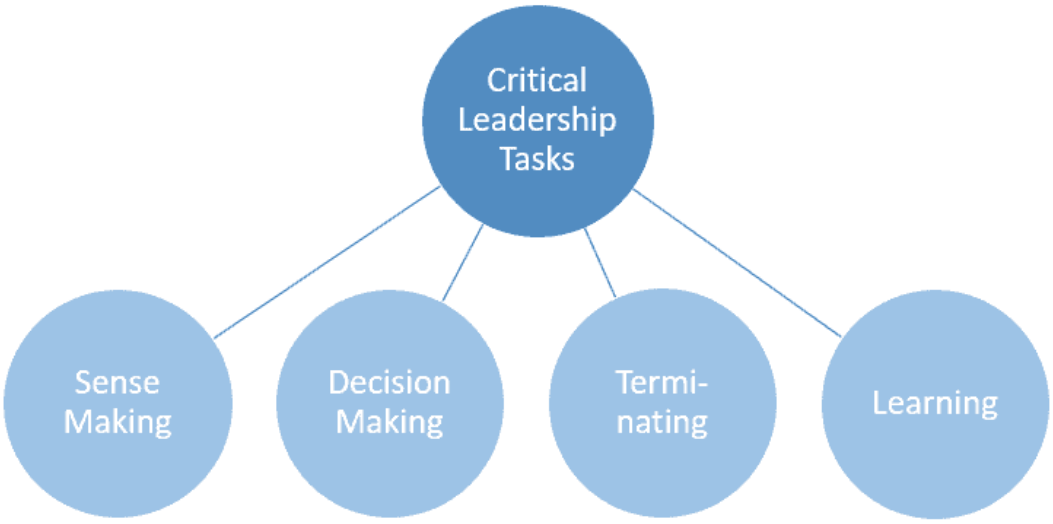
In the early stages of a crisis, leaders need to assess what information is crucial and what information they need to gather. There may be a paradoxical danger of information overload in some areas and a complete lack of information in others. For crises that appear out of the blue, information which leaders want includes:

- How many casualties?
- What damage has been done?
- Were the causes accidental?
- Is there a possibility of further threats?

If answers to these questions are not available, an alternative is to determine what has not been affected – what is still intact. A crisis leader needs a sense of the available useful information and the information gaps.

Leaders also have an important role in authorizing the action of others. Leaders do not have the capacity to respond to all situations themselves, and this requires the authorization of speedier decision-making than that normally associated with traditional hierarchies. In a similar vein, leaders can usefully know when to call in outside help which can provide necessary expertise not available otherwise.

There are four critical tasks that leaders engage in and generally are good at during a crisis:



1. Sense making:
Some crises are readily apparent, but others unfold and produce vague, ambivalent and contradictory signals. Leaders interpret these signals and define the crisis. Leaders are expected to reduce uncertainty by providing information on what is happening and what needs to be done.

2. Decision making:
Decision making in a crisis often involves trade-offs and significant risks. Effective crisis responses also require the coordination of many different groups and agencies. Leaders make crucial decisions themselves, and also know when to delegate decision making.

3. Terminating:
It is a leadership task to determine how and when a crisis should and can be terminated, shifting back from emergency to routine. This also involves ensuring that the system of governance is re-stabilized.

4. Learning:
Leaders ensure that there is lesson drawing from the crisis, both organisational and political. The crisis offers lessons for future emergency planning and the training of officials to handle future crises.

Communications

Particularly with regard to external communications with the public and media, a significant part of crisis management is about managing the message in situations that do not lend themselves easily to routine communications.

External communications are vital for both operational and symbolic purposes during a crisis. Operationally, consistent external communications may enhance messages sent to front-line response teams who can be feeling isolated. Communications can inform the media and citizens of what, if anything, they should be doing to minimize the impact of the crisis. Symbolically, communications can foster a positive image of crisis response, provide an opportunity to empathize with those affected by the crisis, and demonstrate the will to resolve the crisis.

In order to manage this communications process well, we highlight a number of communication pathologies to avoid:

- the impression of a slow or ineffective response,
- the impression of having something to hide, i.e. the 'no comment' trap,
- accidentally or purposefully giving out false information,
- inconsistent messages from different actors or layers of government,
- rush to judgment and
- expressing a lack of sympathy.

Such communications pathologies can have the impact of exacerbating a crisis. Poor communications and public relations can significantly worsen the impact of or public perception of a crisis and how it is being managed.

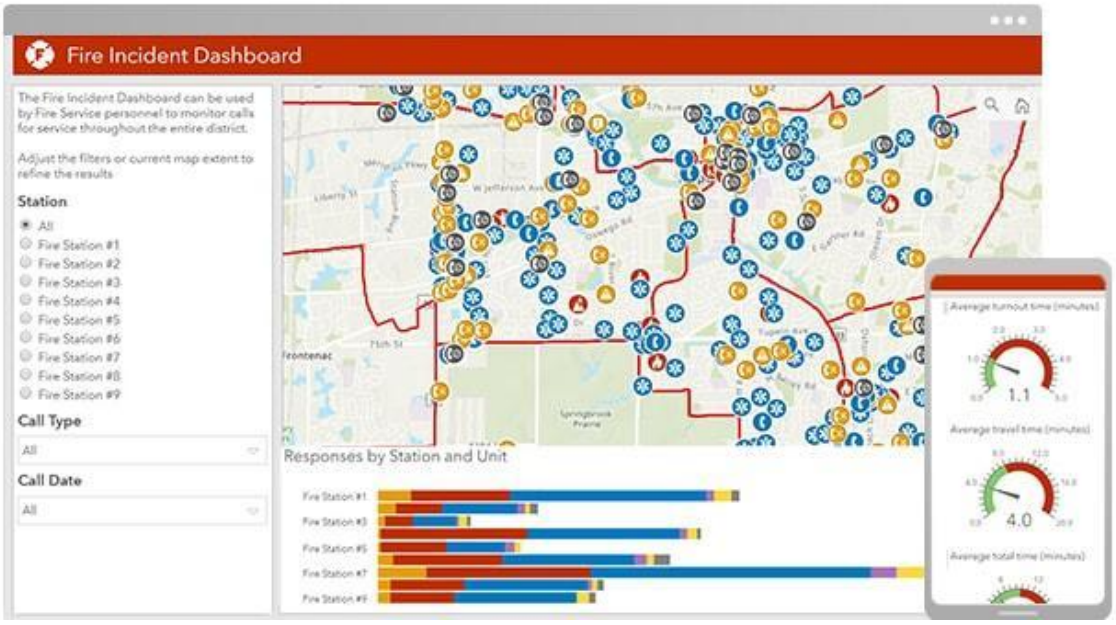
For example, after the **space shuttle Challenger explosion** in 1986, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) delayed contact with the media for some time while they went in search of details. When they finally made a presentation on air, all they did was repeat what millions of viewers had already seen. This was the first of several public relations blunders in the ensuing crisis.

New Technologies

For both communications and other aspects of crisis management, the application of newer technologies can provide important supports, as well as significant new challenges. The use of e-mail, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social networking tools to facilitate discussion, debate, and the exchange of ideas on a worldwide scale is a reality which public managers must take into account in crisis

management. Information and disinformation can be spread rapidly through these new media as well as more traditional media outlets.

New technologies can be used to enable organisations to track, disseminate and communicate information during a crisis. For example in **St. Louis** (US), fire and police departments use an incident management software tool to facilitate the collaboration of first response agencies (see example below).



Particularly when dealing with non-government agencies and individuals, modern technologies and platforms can be an important tool of communication.

Also in the US, **Benton County** suffered communications difficulties between agencies during a fire crisis due to the use of different equipment and poor coordination between different systems. The various agencies are now connected regardless of what communications devices they use, thanks to a new technology-powered, mobile communications unit.
This last example illustrates the importance of compatibility of technologies between different agents during crises. This is an area that can usefully be addressed in the preparing for crisis phase of the crisis management cycle.

5. Evaluation

The **evaluation phase** deals with issues such as post-crisis lesson learning, debriefing and accountability. Crises create great potential for learning from the successes and failures in addressing the crisis as well as promoting accountability for actions taken during the crisis.

However, there is always the danger that such inquiries and evaluations can get overtaken by political fighting between those looking for radical change after a crisis, and those wishing to broadly maintain the status quo.

A number of investigations after the **space shuttle Challenger explosion** in 1986 called attention to the fact that people within engineering areas repeatedly expressed concern about the potential dangers of launching the Challenger under low-temperature conditions. However, people at the top of the organisation reported never having heard anything about such concerns. Information filtering can lead to a reduced organisational capacity to make operationally difficult decisions. Over time attenuation of information, especially if it relates to the core functions of sub-systems, can lead to “organisational blindness”. Such cultural phenomena have been said to manifest readily in pre-crisis incubation periods.
The culture of organisations can often influence the degree to which they actually learn from crises. Organisations where safety is at the heart of what they do, such as air traffic control or fire fighting services, have systems and cultures that support learning and are keen to identify failures and do what they can to eradicate them.

In more traditional public organisations, post-crisis learning has to compete with the day-to-day goals of the organisation, and may not be as deeply embedded in the culture. This is something that leaders and managers need to give attention to.

Organisations need to give particular attention to their capacity to learn. This is a particular challenge when the crisis and its impacts cut across agencies, and cross-organisational learning is needed, as the case study on shared learning across agencies illustrates.

Learning can range from operational improvements that enhance crisis response in the future to more fundamental reviews of organisational and system-wide capacity.

6. Apollo 13 Example

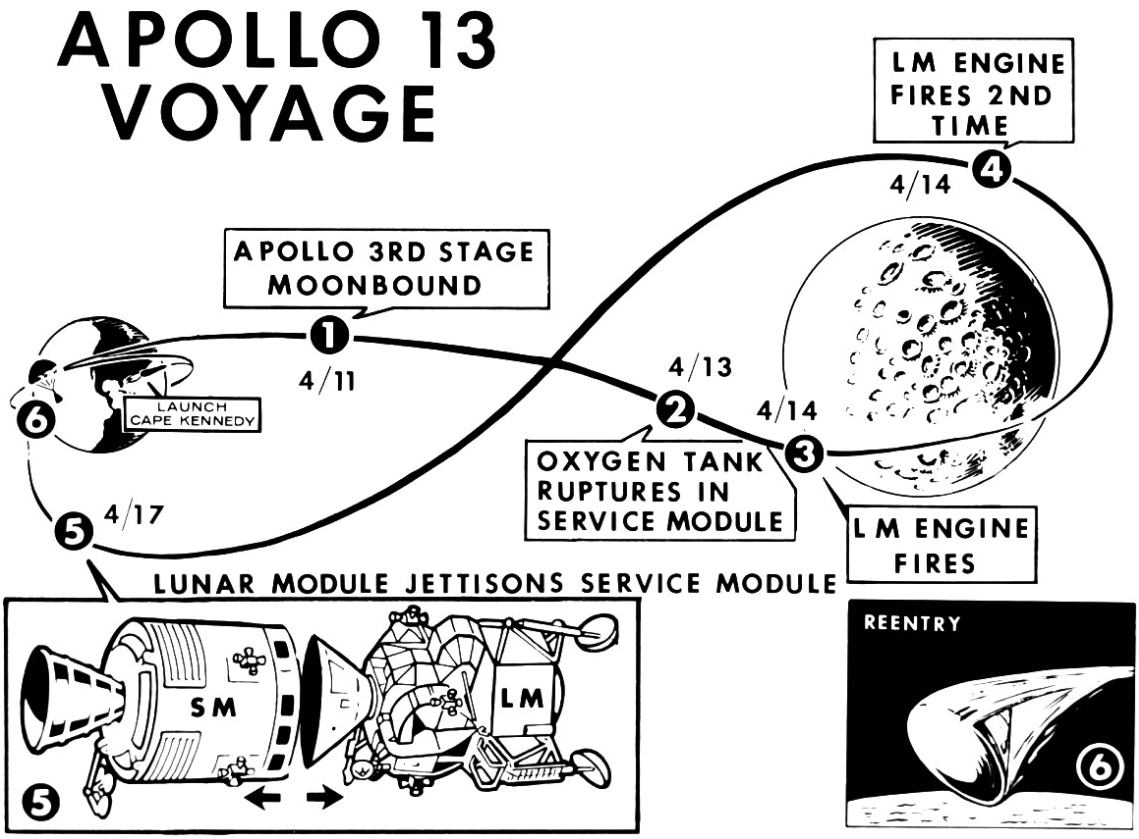
The American Apollo 13 lunar mission in 1970 became one of the greatest death-defying adventures in history. The three crew members, along with support from their ground team, allowed for a successful return, averting what everyone thought would surely be a fatal mission.

Background
Apollo 13 was the third crewed space mission to land on the Moon. The craft was launched from Kennedy Space Center on April 11, 1970, but the lunar landing was aborted after the rocket suffered catastrophic damage by a burst oxygen tank two days into the mission.

“Houston, we’ve had a problem.”

– Jim Lovell, Apollo 13 mission commander

The crew was forced to use the lunar module as a lifeboat back to earth. Although the module was designed to support two men on the lunar surface for two days, Mission Control in Houston improvised new procedures so it could support three men for four days. The crew experienced great hardship caused by limited power, a cold cabin, and a shortage of water. Finally, the crew was able to loop around the Moon and returned safely to Earth on April 17.



Lessons to Learn

The Apollo 13 mission is often described as a “successful failure”: a failure since it never achieved the prime objective of landing on the moon, successful because all employees who worked for NASA pulled together in an astounding feat of teamwork to save the crew. That being said, there are six lessons to take away from the Apollo 13 mission:

- **Remain Calm and Focused.** Stay calm and try to identify the problem. Once you have done that, it’s time to prioritize and execute. As Apollo 13 flight director Gene Kranz put it, “One at a time, people. One at a time.” Identify the issue and take steps to improve your situation.
- **Be Prepared.** Keep some kind of emergency equipment and plans on hand. Having the proper equipment available, and knowing how to use it, could make all the difference.
- **Be Flexible.** As astronaut Fred Haise said, “We had to have Plan B and C and D and on and on.” Hundreds of people at NASA worked simultaneously on ideas to rescue the crew.
- **Seek Help.** Whatever the emergency is, you may not be able to deal with it yourself. Jim Lovell’s famous “Houston, we’ve had a problem,” was his call for help. Recognize the strengths of those around you and enlist their help when needed.

- **Assess and Manage Risks.** Good risk management techniques are essential. NASA had to adjust on the fly during Apollo 13, but many of its improvisations were worked in advance because the organization had done a good job of identifying risks.
- **Learn from the crisis.** Since the Apollo 13 incident, NASA has taken dramatic steps to ensure its astronauts are better prepared than ever by improving training and simulations. They have contingency plans in place for incidents they never would've thought of before – because the most dangerous emergency is the one you never see coming.

7. Conclusion

A crisis is a change, which may be sudden or which may take some time to evolve, which results in an urgent problem that must be addressed immediately. Crisis management is the process of identifying a potential crisis and coordinating organisational or inter-organisational responses.

Two broad lessons emerge from this review of crisis management:

One is that there are a number of **tools, techniques and procedures** that can be of invaluable assistance to managers in preparing for and dealing with a crisis. Developing crisis management plans, envisaging and preparing for alternative scenarios, and using exercises to simulate crises can all be helpful in preparing for a crisis. During a crisis, using an Incident Command System (ICS) and communication planning are amongst the things that can help ensure an effective response.

The second broad lesson is that all of these supports have **limitations**, and if used incorrectly can make the crisis worse rather than better. There can be no replacement for good judgment and leadership in these circumstances. Flexibility of response within clearly defined parameters is needed. There is no simple set of principles of effective crisis management which if followed will lead to positive conclusions. Crises

are messy, unprecedented and unpredictable in their actual on-the-ground impact.

Public organisations need to anticipate and prepare for a wide range of crises they may need to respond to. Some of these are large scale and with widespread impacts, such as pandemics or terrorist attacks. Others are smaller in nature but no less of a crisis to those affected, such as a fire at a public building or localized serious water contamination. Using a blend of support tools and good judgment, public leaders at all levels in organisations can help ensure that such crises are handled as well as possible to the benefit of society as a whole.

Welcome to Time Management!
It seems that there is never enough time in the day. But, since we all get the same 24 hours, why is it that some people achieve so much more with their time than others? The answer lies in proper time management.

The highest achievers manage their time exceptionally well. By using popular time-management techniques, you can improve your ability to function more effectively – even when time is tight, and pressures are high. Excellent time management requires a significant shift in focus from activities to results: being busy isn't the same as being productive. Ironically, the opposite is often closer to the truth.

Spending your day in a frenzy of activity often achieves less, because you're dividing your attention between so many different tasks. Proper time management lets you work smarter – not harder – so you get more done in less time. "Time management" refers to the way that you organize and plan how long you spend on specific activities.

It may seem counter-intuitive to dedicate precious time to learning about time management, instead of using it to get on with your work, but the benefits are enormous:

- Greater productivity and efficiency.
- A better professional reputation.
- Less stress.
- Increased opportunities for advancement.
- Better opportunities to achieve life and career goals.

Failing to manage your time effectively can have some very undesirable consequences:

- Missed deadlines.
- Inefficient workflow.
- Poor work quality.
- Poor professional reputation and a stalled career.
- Higher stress levels.

Spending a little time learning about time-management techniques will have huge benefits now – and throughout your career.

There is a difference between being effective at managing your time and simply being busy. Many of us are used to busy work and may not even question anymore whether or not it is a valid use of our time. But this course will help you take on a new time management goal: Concentrate on results, not on staying busy.

2. Self-Assessment

Let's start our online course about time management with an assessment of where you are now. On the next three pages, you will be asked to complete three brief mental exercises which can give you an idea of whether or not time management might be an issue for you.

Exercise 1

First, on a sheet of paper, draw a line down the middle. On the left-hand side, list at least five things that are the most important to you. Start with the most important, and continue the list in order. List people, things, ideals, activities – whatever it is that is very important to you and your happiness. For example, a list might look like this:

Family Health Integrity Friends	

Work Pets Reading	

On the right-hand side, list all the things that you spend your time on. Start with what you spend most of your time on and continue with what you spend the least time on. This list might look like this:

Family Health Integrity Friends Work Pets Reading	Work Family Sleeping Errands Housework Helping kids with homework Friends

You've probably figured out the point of the exercise by now. Most of us don't have the luxury of spending the majority of our time on the things that are most important to us. For every item that we are not spending what we would consider to be enough time on, we will experience some form of dissatisfaction over that fact. When things are very important to us, and we are not able to dedicate any time to those things at all, unhappiness is often the result.

However, successful time management will help you to become more effective in completing the tasks that you have to complete so that there is more time available for you to spend on the things that are important to you. This isn't necessarily always an easy feat; in some cases, it would require significant changes for you to spend time on the things that are important to you.

For example, if you currently don't have a college degree but you feel that getting one would significantly enhance your career possibilities, deciding to go back to school is a significant, life-altering decision that demands that you restructure your time accordingly. But at the same time, many things that we want to do can be accommodated if we learn to use our time more wisely by applying some effective time management techniques. Doing so will make us happier and more balanced so that we are less susceptible to stress and more able to achieve our goals.

Time management also helps you have a greater sense of control over your life – both at work and at home. When you feel as if you are in control of your time, you feel empowered and confident. When something arises that you were not prepared for, you're more likely to be able to deal with it productively rather than getting stopped by it.

Exercise 2

Let's continue with another short exercise. Answer each of the questions below by rating yourself on each item listed with a 1-5, with one being the lowest or least frequent and five being the highest or most frequent.

Section I:

- Using goal-setting to determine what activities to work on.
- Facing deadlines and commitments without stress.
- Checking in with the boss to confirm priorities.
- Considering how valuable the results will be before taking on a project or task.

Section II:

- Working on tasks that have the highest priority.
- Being aware of how much time I spend on each of my job tasks.
- Being aware of the value of each task I complete.
- Prioritizing each new assignment or task according to an analysis of its importance.
- Prioritizing a daily 'to do' list.

Section III:

- Preventing and managing interruptions daily.
- Staying focused on important tasks.
- Completing everything during the workday rather than taking work home.

Section IV:

- Completing tasks well before they are due.
- Meeting deadlines without having to ask for extensions.
- Sticking to a daily work schedule to complete assigned tasks.

Section V:

- Setting aside time for scheduling and planning.
- Planning time in my day for the unexpected.
- Planning daily breaks during the workday.

Did you score yourself for each item? Perfect. Now, for each section, total up your score and then divide it by the number of questions in that section to give yourself an average score for that section. Now order the sections from lowest to highest. For example, your results might look like this:

- Section II: 2.4
- Section IV: 2.8
- Section I: 3.2
- Section V: 3.5
- Section III: 3.7

Each of the sections you scored is related to a specific time-management skill, as shown below:

- Section I: **Goal Setting**
- Section II: **Prioritization**
- Section III: **Managing Interruptions**
- Section IV: **Procrastination**
- Section V: **Scheduling**

From the sample results above, I would know that my weakest area of time management is Section II, or prioritization. It would behoove me to start working on that skill first before moving on to additional skills. I would next work on Section IV, or procrastination, and so on. It would be a mistake to assume that just because my results show that I am strongest in managing interruptions that there is nothing more for me to learn in that area.

Exercise 3

Another way to gauge where your time management issues might be is to keep track of how you spend your time at work. To get an accurate picture, you will need to choose a period of time, preferably a week, that is representative of your average workload. For example, if you have a peak in activity at the end of the month, you would want to pick a week that crosses into that timeframe but is not entirely in that timeframe so that the ‘normal’ days balance out the heavier workload days. You wouldn’t want to pick the week of winter holidays unless you are

specifically interested in identifying how you use your time during that period of the year.

Next, assign a number to each item you list that indicates the priority level of that item in comparison with everything else that you had to do that day. Give a 1 to items that were low priority, a 2 to items that were medium priority, and a 3 to items that were highest in priority.

A sample daily activity log might look like this:

DATE:	August 12, 2010			
Time Started	Time Ended	Total Time	Activity	Priority 1= Low 2= Medium 3= High
8:00	8:05	5 minutes	Listened to voicemail	2
8:05	9:15	70 minutes	Responded to emails	2
9:15	10:30	45 minutes	Prepared slides for presentation	3
10:30	10:45	15 minutes	Chatted with Sue	1

There are a few guidelines to follow to get the most value out of this activity. These include:

- Use one sheet per day
- Be accurate. Instead of saying ‘worked on a project,’ put down exactly what you did to work on the project. Did you meet with others? Research benchmark information? Be as specific as you can
- Be honest. This is only for you; no one else is going to see it. So be honest about your day and how you spend your time. That’s the only way you will be able to identify areas that you can improve.

- Watch the prioritization of your tasks. Not everything can be a 3, and hopefully, not everything is a 1, though you could find one day having all of the same levels of priority in activities.

At the end of the day, review the information you wrote down and use it to identify the results you achieved that day. From our example (table above), checking your voicemail might have resulted in confirming an appointment. Checking and responding to emails might have resulted in resolving a problem. Chatting with Sue probably didn't have any results unless it was work-related. If you don't see any results that came from an activity, mark that activity with an asterisk (*). At the end of the week, those starred activities will represent possible areas for improving your use of time.

Now notice how you spent your time in relation to your priorities. Ideally, you spent the most amount of time on the items with the highest priority and the least amount of time on items with the lowest priority. If you see that this is not the case, and it's a pattern over time, you have identified one possible area for improvement already.

Depending on how comfortable you feel about it, consider sharing the results of your activity log with your supervisor. It can be a great way to start a conversation about the priorities that he or she wants you to focus on versus where your time is actually going.

3. Goal Setting

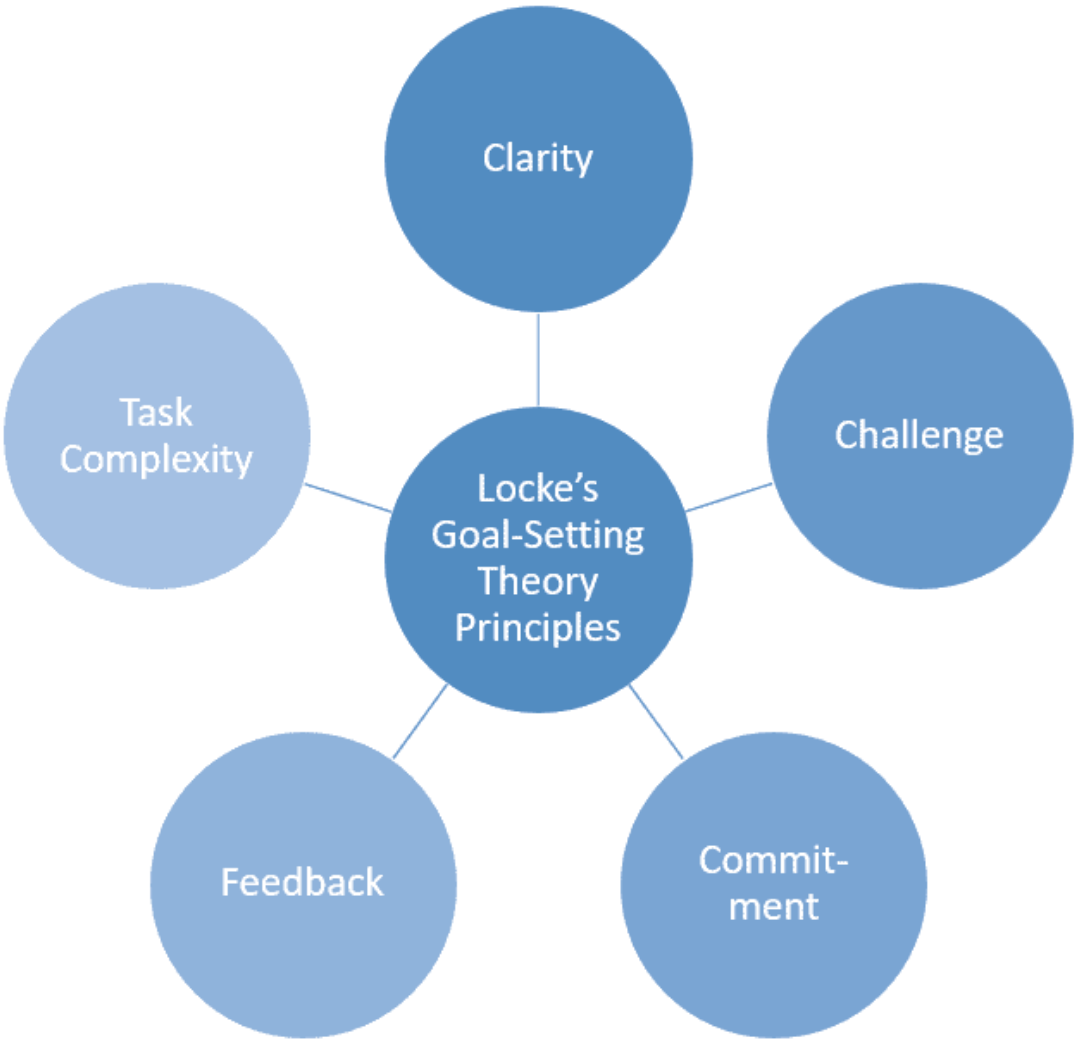
Goal setting is a powerful tool that can be used to motivate and challenge employees or yourself. Knowing that you have achieved a goal gives you a sense of accomplishment and gives you a way to keep track of what you have completed in the workplace.

Locke's Goal-Setting Theory

Dr. Edwin Locke published his theory on goal setting in 1968 in an article called "Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives." His

argument was that employees were motivated by having a goal to work towards and that reaching that goal improved work performance overall. He showed that people work better when their goals are specific and challenging rather than vague and easy. For example, telling someone to 'improve customer service' is not precise. You might know what it means, but will the employee interpret it the same way? Instead, the goal should be clear, such as 'reduce customer complaints by 50% over five months.'

In 1990, Locke and Dr. Gary Latham published "A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance" in which they identified five principles that were important in setting goals that will motivate others. These principles are:



- **Clarity:** A clear goal is one that can be measured and leaves no room for misunderstanding. Goals should be very explicit regarding what behavior is desired and will be rewarded. Look at

the goals listed in Figure 2 below to help you understand how to be more explicit when setting goals. Continue to ask yourself the question, 'What will it look like if the goal is completed?' The answer to the question will help you identify clear goals.

- **Challenge:** What would give you a greater sense of accomplishment: achieving an easy goal or achieving one that was a real challenge? We are motivated by the reward that we believe we will receive for completing tasks. So if we know that a goal is a challenge and is also perceived as such by those that assigned it to us, we are more likely to be motivated to achieve it.
- **Commitment:** For goals to be effective, they need to be agreed upon. The goal should be in line with the established expectations that you have had for the employee in the past. The employee and employer must both be committed to using the resources needed to complete the goal and should also agree on what the reward will be. This takes more time and energy on both parts, but it prevents an end result where the employee didn't have what he or she needed to have in order to be successful, or where the employer is frustrated by the employee's distaste for pursuing the goal.
- **Feedback:** Goal setting is not going to be effective if there is not an opportunity for feedback. What if the person is halfway to completing the goal, but they have a question? What if you suspect that the person is going about the process of completing the goal in the wrong way? Feedback is a chance to correct or clarify before the goal has been reached.
- **Task complexity:** The final principle in Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory is related to the level of complexity of the assigned task. When a role is complex or highly technical, the person in that role is often already highly motivated or else they wouldn't have reached that level in their organization. However, even the most motivated person can become discouraged if the complexity of the task and the time it would take to complete, it wasn't fully understood. Projects can have the tendency to reveal themselves as being more complex after they have begun, so both the employee and supervisor need to be in communication about how involved a task has become.

SMART Goals

In goal setting, there is one method that has stood the test of time. Although there have been variations to what the acronym stands for over time, the primary definition of a SMART goal is one that is:

- **Specific:** When a goal is specific, then you have clearly identified what it is that you expect to be accomplished. If you can't say what you want to achieve, then how can you expect yourself or a subordinate to be able to achieve it? A specific goal will answer questions like: Who is taking action or is affected? What is the result I want to achieve? When do I want to complete this goal?
- **Measurable:** Each goal that you set should be measurable so that you have a means of ascertaining how far along you are in reaching the goal as well as when the goal will be complete. If

you have a measure for the entire project, for example, reaching 750 customers, then you can also determine how much of your daily workload should be dedicated to achieving the goal.

- **Attainable:** Before you begin working, you need to be sure that the goal is truly achievable. If a goal is not feasible given the constraints that you face, you either need to work towards removing those restraints or lowering the level of the goal so that it becomes attainable.
- **Realistic:** If a goal is to be realistic, it must be something that you are willing and able to work towards. This doesn't mean that all your goals have to be low and simple. It just means that you have done a thorough analysis of the task at hand, and you have come to the conclusion that the goal is realistic. Some questions you could ask yourself during this analysis include: Do I have the resources (financial, personnel, equipment, etc.) to reach the goal? Do I have the support of others in the department and the organization?
- **Timely:** The final component of the SMART goals strategy is 'timely.' Without adding a time restriction to your goals, you don't have the necessary motivation to get going as soon as possible. Adding a realistic time boundary lends a sense of urgency to your goal and will help to keep you focused. Since organizations change regularly, so can goals. Making sure your goal is set with a time limit also ensures that you complete the goal while it is still relevant to what you are doing on the job.

4. Prioritization

Prioritization is the skill to make the best, most effective use of your time, ability, and resources as well as those of your team. When you feel like work is never-ending and time is at a premium, prioritization is what will help you spend your time wisely and move forward on meaningful goals.

Important vs. Urgent

We've all had it happen. We're having a good day, getting our work done when someone calls or rushes into the office in a hurry. They have a fire on their hands, and they want your help in putting it out. You feel the need to drop what you're doing and dedicate your time to helping them with the latest crisis. You have to be a team player, right? And if the person asking for help is your boss, do you really have a choice?

Well, maybe you do have a choice. You need to learn to determine whether or not the sudden urgent request from someone else is truly important concerning your goals, your priorities, and your role in the organization. To help you do this, consider the chart below. You'll see that the table is divided into four quadrants based on whether or not an item is important and whether or not it is urgent.

	Important	Not Important
Urgent	**QUADRANT I**	**QUADRANT II**
Not Urgent	**QUADRANT III**	**QUADRANT IV**

Looking at the figure above, in which quadrant would we ideally spend the majority of our workdays? To have the highest job satisfaction and the least amount of work-related stress, we would spend the majority of our time in Quadrant III. In this quadrant, we are not harried by urgent, pressing matters, but we are working on things that are important to the organization. We can make progress and move forward, feeling at the end of the day that we have accomplished a great deal.

That's the ideal world. But where do we spend most of our time in the real world? If you are always responding to the crises of others – even when they don't have an impact on your own work or work product, then

you are in Quadrant II. Everything feels urgent, but it's not actually important. If you spend your day doing busywork, then you are focused in Quadrant IV, where things are not urgent and are not important. This can be a frustrating experience because you may not be able to feel as if you have contributed something of value at the end of the day. These could be distractions as well, such as talking to colleagues, surfing the internet, or other time-wasters.

All of us are going to spend time in Quadrant I eventually. Whatever is at stake is actually very important to our own job or work product, and it happens to be urgent as well. What you want to learn is to distinguish these true emergency situations from situations that seem urgent but just aren't that important. Before you drop everything next time, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this truly important or just urgent to the person requesting my help?
- What will the consequences be if I don't handle this immediately?

	Customer Service (A)	Employee Training (B)	Increasing Sales (C)	Decreasing Lost Revenue (D)
Customer Service (A)				
Employee Training (B)				
Increasing Sales (C)				
Decreasing Lost Revenue (D)				

- Do I actually have important and urgent things that should be done instead?
- Is there someone else who can handle this situation?

If you determine that the request for your action is actually not both urgent and important, then chances are there is someone better suited to handle the request. If you are receiving the request from your supervisor, you can ask her what she would rather that you focus on – the item that is both urgent and important, or the item that she has brought to you.

Reminding her that you have other important work to do and that it will have to wait if you respond to her urgent request might have her reassign the request – or it might not. But at least you know that you are applying your efforts to exactly the activity that she wants you to handle at that time.

Paired Comparison Analysis

When you aren't certain how to make a decision because you can't seem to identify good criteria, a paired comparison analysis can be useful. It allows you to compare each item on your list with every other item on the list in order to determine which are the most important. It is also very useful when you are trying to compare things that are completely different from one another.

Let's imagine that you can't decide which of the following to focus on first:

- Customer service
- Employee training
- Increasing sales
- Decreasing lost revenue

You start by creating the paired comparison chart. Assign a letter (in this case, A-D) to each of the four items you are trying to prioritize. Then create a grid with each item as a row heading and a column heading. (You can ignore the blocks that have you comparing the item to itself since there will not be anything to prioritize in those cases. You should then ignore the boxes that are repeating a comparison such as Employee Training vs. Increasing Sales and Increasing Sales vs. Employee Training.)

In the boxes that remain, you compare the two items and determine which one is more important. For example, if you start at the top left, the first pair that you are comparing is Customer Service and Employee Training. Between those two items, write the letter of which item is more important. Follow it with a number that relates to how large the difference in importance is, starting with 0 for there being no significant difference in importance to 3 for a large difference in importance.

	Customer Service (A)	Employee Training (B)	Increasing Sales (C)	Decreasing Lost Revenue (D)
Customer Service (A)		A, 2	C, 1	D,1
Employee Training (B)			C, 2	D, 3
Increasing Sales (C)				C, 2
Decreasing Lost Revenue (D)				

Now you can determine the results by adding up the importance scores for each item. In our example, the results would be:

- A: 2
- B: 0
- C: 5
- D: 4

From this analysis, we can determine that increasing sales has the highest priority, followed closely by decreasing lost revenue. These would be the two items to give the most priority according to this tool. It's important to note that although employee training received no rating, that doesn't mean that it is not important at all – it may already be of high quality or it might just not be as large an area of concern as the other three items.

Grid Analysis

When you have a number of good options to consider and a number of factors that could influence the decision, you may need a prioritization tool that is more complex than the paired comparison grid. In these cases, a grid analysis is a useful tool for making decisions or prioritizing your work.

To begin, you'll create another grid. This time the options will be the rows, and the factors that will affect your prioritization will be the column

headings. You will then assign a score and a weight to each pairing in order to get an overall score for each option. Let's use an example for this grid analysis of prioritizing which firm to use as a marketing consultant.

	Cost	Overall Experience	Experience Similar to This Project	Recommendations	Quoted Time Frame
Weights:					
ABC Consulting					
Market Consulting Inc.					
XYZ Consulting					
Global Consulting Resources					

Now that your grid is ready, you need to assign a weight to each factor so that you know which factors are most important and which are less important. Use zero if the factor isn't important at all and five for the most important factor or factors. You can have more than one factor with the same score. Write the weight in the 'weight' row in your grid.

Next, you will start with the first column, in this case, cost. Go down the column and rate each option on this factor with a number from zero for poor to five for excellent. Then move on to the next column and complete the same rating, repeating this step until the columns are all completed. The resulting grid will look like this:

	Cost	Overall Experience	Experience Similar to This Project	Recommendations	Quoted Time Frame
Weights:	5	3	5	4	2
ABC Consulting	3	3	1	5	4
Market Consulting Inc.	4	4	3	4	4
XYZ Consulting	5	4	5	3	3
Global Consulting Resources	2	5	5	5	1

To calculate the results, you take the rating that you gave the consulting firm for a category and multiply it by the weight factor. For example, ABC Consulting was rated a ‘3’ on cost, which has a weight factor of ‘5’. Simply multiply 3 by 5 for a score of 15 for this category for ABC Consulting. Once you have all of the scores tabulated, you add the scores across each factor to get a total score for each option.

	Cost	Overall Experience	Experience Similar to This Project	Recommendations	Quoted Time Frame	TOTAL
Weights:	5	3	5	4	2	
ABC Consulting	15	9	5	20	8	57
Market Consulting Inc.	20	12	15	16	8	71
XYZ Consulting	25	12	25	12	6	80
Global Consulting Resources	10	15	25	20	2	72

In this case, the 'winner' is XYZ Consulting. When you present your recommendations for a consulting firm, you can now demonstrate a logical reason for the recommendation and even discuss the different factors individually should someone want to remove a factor from consideration.

Pareto Analysis

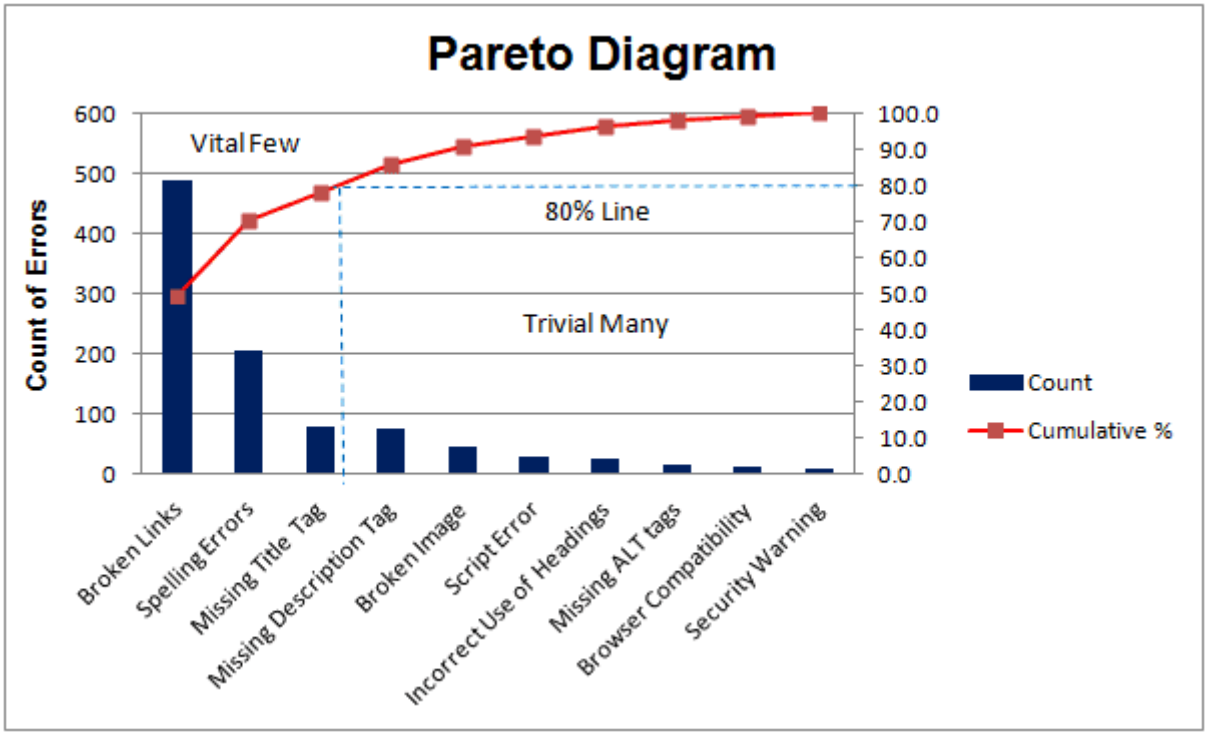
Pareto Analysis is a statistical technique in decision-making used for the selection of a limited number of tasks that produce a significant overall effect. It uses the Pareto Principle (also known as the 80/20 rule) the idea that by doing 20% of the work, you can generate 80% of the benefit of doing the entire job. Take quality improvement, for example, a vast majority of problems (80%) are produced by a few key causes (20%). This technique is also called the vital few and the trivial many.

We can apply the 80/20 rule to almost anything:

- 80% of customer complaints arise from 20% of your products and services.
- 80% of delays in the schedule result from 20% of the possible causes of the delays.

- 20% of your products and services account for 80% of your profit.
- 20% of your sales force produces 80% of your company revenues.
- 20% of a system's defects cause 80% of its problems.

Here is a simple example of a Pareto diagram, using sample data showing the relative frequency of causes for errors on websites. It enables you to see what 20% of cases are causing 80% of the problems and where efforts should be focused to achieve the greatest improvement. In this case, we can see that broken links, spelling errors, and missing title tags should be the focus:



The value of the Pareto Principle for a project manager is that it reminds you to focus on the 20% of things that matter. Of the things you do for your project, only 20% is crucial. That 20% produces 80% of your results. Identify and focus on those things first, but don't entirely ignore the remaining 80% of the causes.

Nominal Group Technique

When you work in a group, you often have to come to some sort of consensus on what your priorities should be. It is not always easy to do so, particularly when the group members have different motives and

different goals. The Nominal Group Technique is a means of reaching consensus when you have a diverse group and when having each member ‘buy-in’ to the decision is important for the success of the team.

While in a group, you create a list of issues that you think you need to prioritize. Once you have identified the list, see if there are items in the list that can be grouped together. For example, if you had on the list ‘poor response from technical support’ and ‘technical support takes too long to reply,’ you could group those two together.

Once you have a final list, have each person rank what they feel is the most important to the least important issue to be solved. Encourage them to think of each item in terms of the impact it has on their results. If there are 10 issues, the ranking should be 1 to 10 with 10 being the most important and 1 being the least important.

What you end up with is a data set that you can use to determine what the group feels is the priority issue to work on:

	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5	Issue 6
Amy (or Person 1 if you are doing this anonymously)	5	1	3	4	6	2
George	6	4	1	3	2	5
Pete	2	3	5	6	1	4
Celia	4	1	2	5	3	6
Robert	1	2	4	6	3	5
Ann	3	2	6	4	5	1
TOTALS:	21	13	21	28	20	23

In this example, there is a strong sense from the group that Issue 2 is the least important issue that you are facing. The group has also determined that the most important issue is Issue 4. If you decide to assign priority to work assignments using this method, you would focus on those that

would improve Issue 4 before moving on to Issue 6 and so on. In a case where your scores are tied for an issue, you may have to make the decision using another tool or simply ask your supervisor which item they would prefer that you work on.

5. Managing Interruptions

If you used the daily activity log exercise recommended in Chapter 2, then you probably have a good idea of how many times in the day you face interruptions. Most of us are so accustomed to being interrupted during the day that we won't even notice when it is happening.

Some interruptions are inevitable, since not everyone that you work with, from bosses to subordinates, will have the same exact priorities every day that you have. In an ideal world you could simply align your priorities so that you all had the exact same work tasks every day and you would greatly decrease or eliminate interruptions.

But in many work situations, this is impossible. We all have a role to play in our organization that is different from the role of our colleagues. This means that eventually, there will be interruptions. How you manage them, however, is entirely up to you. Here are some tips that might help:

- Before calling a meeting, determine if it is truly necessary. Can you handle it by email or a short conference call? Don't take your time and the time of other people unless a meeting is truly the best way to achieve your goal.
- Before calling a meeting, be sure that you have a specific result in mind. If you don't know why you are meeting, how will you know if you accomplished what you needed to accomplish?
- Before attending a meeting, be sure that you understand exactly what the meeting is about. 'To discuss the third quarter figures' is not specific enough; what is the expected result? Then when you go to the meeting, you'll be fully prepared to participate and move the group towards the result that is expected.

- Do your most important tasks first. Believe it or not, work that's of lesser importance (busywork) can distract you from doing your most important work. People often think that by crossing a ton of small items off their to-do list, they'll feel productive. Don't let these little tasks interrupt the progress you need to make on your bigger goals!
- Use 'Do Not Disturb.' If you have that feature on your phone system, use it. The feature allows you to direct calls to your voicemail rather than having the phone ring in your office. Then when it is convenient for you, you can respond. Don't be afraid to use a sign on your door that says 'do not disturb' if you have a serious deadline that you have to concentrate on – sometimes a physical sign is what it will take for some people to get the message.
- Stand up to visitors. Not in the sense of defending yourself, but in the sense of defending your time. An excellent tactic for ending a conversation is to simply stand up from your desk. This signals to the other person that you have somewhere to be. If you have to, actually walk out of the office. Head to the bathroom, the break room, or even the stairwell for a moment before returning to your desk.
- Learn to say no. Most of us don't like to say no to others. We want to be seen as a team player, and we want to be included in what the rest of the team is talking about or doing. But sometimes the best thing for you and your workload is to simply say no. You can do so graciously, of course, by giving the person another opportunity for whatever they are offering. If they invite you to lunch today, propose that you go on Friday. If they want your input on how they are progressing on their project, let them know that you would like to help them but you can't at the moment – then schedule time in your week to help them when it's convenient for you both.
- Prioritize your email and ask others to do the same by using an appropriate subject heading. Not every email is urgent! Then again, some are. So use the indication of urgent conservatively and ask others to use it sparingly as well. Your email subject should be clear and indicate whether or not a response is needed.

Think back to your last workday, and consider for a minute the many interruptions that occurred. There may have been phone calls, emails, hallway conversations, colleagues stopping by your office, or anything else that unexpectedly demanded your attention and, in doing so,

distracted you from the task at hand. Because your day only has so many hours in it, a handful of small interruptions can rob you of the time you need to achieve your goals and be successful in your work and life. More than this, they can break your focus, meaning that you have to spend time re-engaging with the thought processes needed to complete complex work successfully.

6. Procrastination

In order to manage procrastination, you need to first become aware of when it is happening. Next, you will need to try to understand why you are procrastinating. Once you understand why you are procrastinating, you can take the steps needed to manage and resolve it.

Indicators of Procrastination

There are times when you have a valid reason for avoiding doing a project. For example, perhaps you don't have all the information you need or you believe that by waiting an additional time period you will have more accurate results. And then there are the times when waiting is simply that – waiting. When you are focusing on something other than what you should be focusing on according to your priorities and the priorities of your organization, you are procrastinating.

Another more scientific definition comes from psychologist Clarry Lay. He states that procrastination is the gap between the time that we intend to perform a task and the time that we actually perform it. That gap of time could actually be applied to the task that you are avoiding, getting it completed and out of your way that much sooner.

When you are focusing on something other than what you should be focusing on according to your priorities and the priorities of your organization, you are procrastinating.

Are you still not sure of how often you procrastinate when you good simply tackle the task and get it done? Here are some common indications that you may be procrastinating:

- Filling your 'to do' list with items of low importance
- Filling your 'to do' list just to look busy
- Handling papers repeatedly instead of doing what you need to do with them the first time
- Reading emails repeatedly without deleting, filing, or responding to them
- Finding reasons to leave your desk when you start working on a high-priority task
- Leaving something on your 'to do' list that is actually important
- Deciding to postpone working on something until you feel like it, have more energy, or are in a better mood
- Saying yes to helping others with tasks that are not as important as those already on your 'to do' list
- Deciding to wait to work on a project because you think you do your best work under pressure

If you performed the Daily Activity Log exercise described in Chapter One, you can now look back at your logs and see if you can identify where you were procrastinating. Look for tasks that you normally have a hard time completing. Then look to see what you did earlier that day. Did you take multiple coffee breaks? Did you make phone calls that weren't really necessary at that time? Once you recognize when you procrastinate, you have the opportunity to change your attitude and your behaviors in order to manage and eliminate procrastinating behavior.

Strategies for Overcoming Procrastination

Unfortunately, procrastination can become an ingrained habit that is difficult to stop. So you will need to work to conscientiously combat the behaviors that have led to your procrastination in the past.

There is no one right way to combat procrastination – anything that helps you to be more productive is useful. Consider trying a combination of the techniques in this section until you find the ones that work best for you.

When the Task is Unpleasant: This category of activities is probably the most often experienced – and certainly one that most workers can relate to. What's important is finding a way to motivate yourself and to be accountable for your

actions so that you are less likely to procrastinate and so that you focus on the value that your efforts will bring. Here are some tips that you can use when you simply don't want to do what you have to do:

- Identify what will happen if you don't complete the task. How will it impact you? Your coworkers? What about your customers, both internal and external?
- Remind yourself that you are being paid to do the tasks that your supervisor or the organization feels are most important. If you aren't doing that, you aren't doing what you are being paid to do.
- Determine ways to reward yourself for completing unpleasant tasks. Preferably, they should not be unhealthy rewards!
- Ask your coworker to check up on you to make sure you have done what you said you would do. This is a positive use of peer pressure.
- Remind yourself that you don't have to WANT to do something in order to DO it.

When You Are Disorganized: When you are disorganized, you need to learn the tools that will help you to make organization a normal part of your day. Remember that it can take weeks to change a habit, so you need to give yourself the time to make your new practices your new habits. Here are some suggestions for how to get organized once and for all:

- Make it a rule that you will not leave for the day without clearing up your workspace.
- Force yourself to handle emails and paperwork the first time that you touch them in order to avoid the piles of paper that can tend to accumulate.
- Plan your day according to what the most important things to achieve that day are.
- Use a timer to keep yourself aware of the time you are spending. If you have to work on other tasks besides the one you are facing, set the timer to limit the amount of time you will allow yourself to spend on it before getting back to the task at hand.
- Create a filing system that would allow anyone else to walk into your space and easily locate what they are looking for.
- Don't leave for the day without making a 'to do' list for the next day

When the Project Feels Overwhelming: If you simply feel overwhelmed by a project, we've discussed the fact that it usually means that something is missing. Once you've identified what that 'something' is, you have the opportunity to ask for that support or resource that will help you to lessen the sense that you are

overwhelmed by all that there is to do. You can also try some of the following techniques whenever you feel overwhelmed:

- Take the task and break it into smaller, easily achievable tasks.
- Start with the easiest or fastest tasks first so that you feel some sense of accomplishment.
- Reward yourself as you complete each sub-task. Such positive reinforcement can help you feel more optimistic about the rest of the project.
- Ask for input from others, particularly if you haven't managed a project of this size before. Getting a brief 'lessons learned' from someone else can equip you to recognize pitfalls before you hit them.

When You Are a Perfectionist: Perfectionism is often based on the fear of what will happen if you make a mistake or a fear of 'looking bad.' However, you can take some steps to avoid these negative consequences without getting stopped because you are afraid the results won't be perfect. Some tips include:

- Review the expected results for the project with your supervisor. What would he or she consider success to look like?
- Schedule regular check-in points with your supervisor and/or teammates so you can identify any potential problems before they occur.
- Realize that no one is perfect and hiccups will occur. Instead of letting this cause you to procrastinate, consider it a challenge to your problem-solving skills.
- Practice some stress-management techniques so that you are prepared for those moments when problems arise.

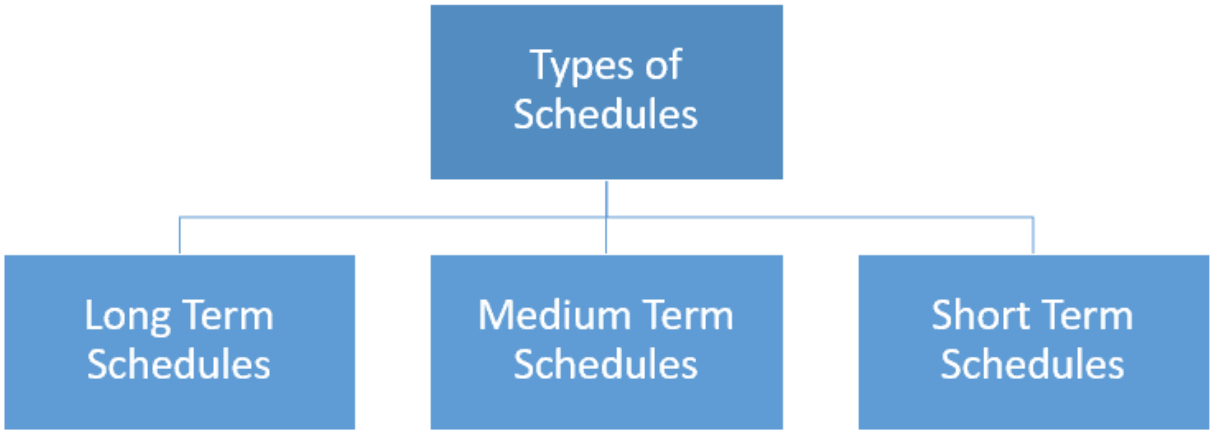
When You Are Having Trouble Making a Decision: In any project there are times when you will have to make a decision. Yet if you aren't sure which option is the best one, you will undoubtedly find yourself at a standstill. However, you need to realize that this is just another form of procrastination. You can take a number of steps to help you make that decision and keep on moving. Some suggestions include:

- Use one of the prioritization tools discussed in this course to help you identify the best choice.
- Use a group consensus to come to the best decision.
- Ask for input from your supervisor or others.
- When all else fails, just make the best choice that you can. Moving forward in any direction is usually better than not moving at all.

7. Scheduling

If you are someone who feels that schedules are restrictive, then you haven't yet learned the power that they can provide. To be able to fit in the things that are important to your job and you, a schedule is a vital tool. It allows you to block out segments of time and assign them to a specific activity.

Scheduling activities help you with your work, particularly if there are certain items that you never seem to find the time to do or items that you seem to put off doing time and again. But to be as effective a tool as possible, you should think about scheduling in short, medium, and long-term time frames:



Long Term Schedules: Most of us have goals that have been set for us for a period of time, such as a quarter or a year. In order to achieve those goals, we need to manage time effectively. Besides using the skills already discussed in this course, a long-term schedule lets you plan for how you will reach these long-term goals.

You can start a long-term schedule with a master schedule that lists those fixed tasks that you identified in the previous section. Then you can fill in what you estimate to be the required time that will be required

each week in order to complete a project on time. You don't necessarily have to decide now that on the third Tuesday of next month you will make phone calls to 25 customers. But you should know what you need to achieve that week in order to meet that month's goals, which will lead you to make that quarter's goals and then your goals for the year.

Medium Term Schedules: In many cases, a weekly or monthly schedule will serve as a long enough time for a medium-term schedule. It simply depends on what makes the most sense for your type of work. For example, if your work tends to cycle over a month-long period, then use a month as the basic length of time for your medium-term schedule. This becomes a snapshot of your activity for the month or week that you can use to help you reach those long term scheduling goals. Again, be sure that you leave time for those unexpected tasks so that they don't derail your planning when they occur. Don't forget to schedule a time to get your scheduling done for next month either.

Short Term Schedules: In most cases, a short-term schedule refers to a daily schedule. Your daily schedule not only helps you make sure that you are working on the most important things first, but it also serves as a record for what you have accomplished. Remember to be as specific as possible when you fill in your daily schedule so that it is perfectly clear whether or not you have achieved what you set out to do. If you still find that you are having time management issues, review your schedule, and compare it to what you actually did during that day. You may be able to discover where the weaknesses remain in your time management skills.

Scheduling is the process of arranging, controlling, and optimizing work and workloads in a production process. Companies use backward and forward scheduling to allocate plant and machinery resources, plan human resources, plan production processes, and purchase materials.

8. Conclusion

It seems that there is never enough time in the day. But, since we all get the same 24 hours, why is it that some people achieve so much more

with their time than others? The answer lies in good time management. The highest achievers manage their time exceptionally well.

By using the time-management techniques that we have covered in this course, you can now improve your ability to function more effectively – even when time is tight and pressures are high. Good time management requires an important shift in focus from activities to results. As we have mentioned it before: **being busy isn't the same as being effective.**

Spending your day in a frenzy of activity often achieves less, because you're dividing your attention between so many different tasks. Good time management lets you work smarter – not harder – so you get more done in less time. Good time management is the process of planning and controlling how much time to spend on specific activities. It enables an individual to complete more in a shorter period of time, lowers stress, and leads to career success.

As you have seen in this course, managing time effectively entails analyzing your goals, breaking those goals into tasks, and then prioritizing those tasks. This isn't always easy or clear cut, given the number of tasks you may need to complete. But if you set clear and measurable goals and then develop an effective to-do list, you'll find prioritizing your many tasks is easier. And, in the end, you'll manage your time better.

In this course, you also learned ways to prioritize your workload. We discussed how to prepare a useful to-do list and prioritize the items on it. The course also outlined how to sequence and queue tasks to help improve your time management. Finally, it described how to schedule your tasks effectively and meet your deadlines.

Welcome to Problem-Solving Skills!
Two generations ago, you might have expected to have your working life mapped out and the knowledge you left school with was probably largely still relevant by the time you retired.

In the 21st century, we live in very different times. Change is accelerating to the point that a learner may need to prepare for a career that has not yet been invented. Technology has changed the way we work, the way we live, the way we play, and the way we learn. We have never lived like this before and are finding new solutions to problems that have never arisen before.

The ability to solve problems has become a vital skill. We need to be able to face new problems, confident in our ability to find workable solutions. We need to possess both logical and creative problem-solving skills to succeed in today's business world.

This course outlines different problem-solving tools that can be used to look at a particular problem from different perspectives. This will help you with finding solutions that were not immediately obvious.

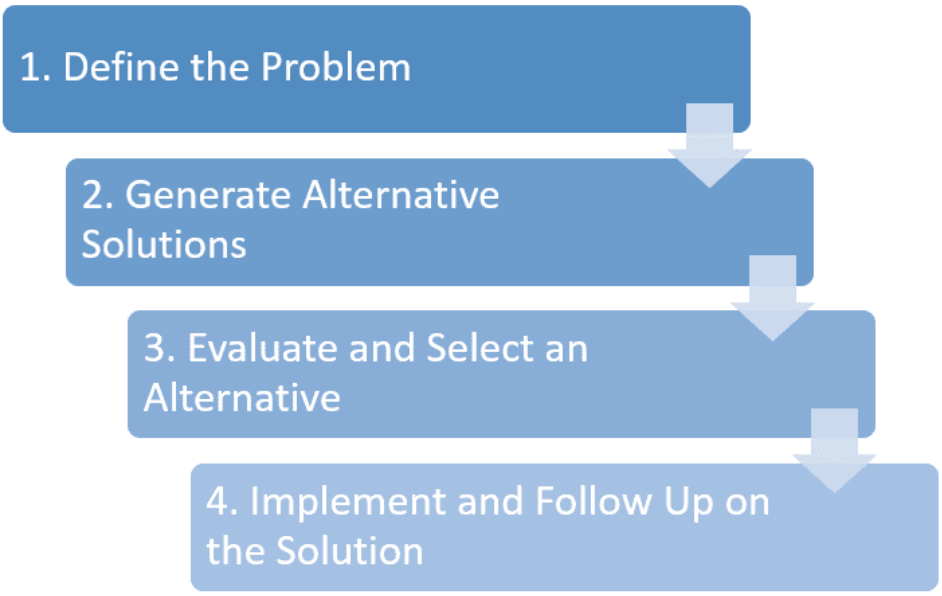
We will also describe techniques that bring structure to the decision-making process. These techniques can be used in isolation or can be combined in order to make rational decisions.

When employers talk about problem-solving skills, they are often referring to the ability to handle difficult or unexpected situations in the workplace as well as complex business challenges. Organizations rely on people who can assess both kinds of situations and calmly identify solutions. Problem-solving skills are traits that enable you to do that. While problem-solving skills are valued by employers, they are also highly useful in other areas of life like relationship building and day-to-day decision making.

2. The Four-Step Model

Problem-solving is the act of defining a problem, determining the cause of the problem, identifying, selecting alternatives for a solution, and implementing a solution. In order to effectively manage a successful organization, leadership must guide their employees and develop problem-solving techniques.

Finding a suitable solution for issues can be accomplished by following this four-step problem-solving process:



1. Define the Problem
Diagnose the situation so that your focus is on the problem, not just its symptoms. Helpful problem-solving techniques include using flowcharts to identify the expected steps of a process and cause-and-effect diagrams to define and analyze root causes. You should begin by reviewing how processes currently work (i.e., who does what, with what information, using what tools, communicating with what organizations and individuals, in what time frame, using what format).

- Consult each faction involved for information.
- Determine in which process the problem lies.
- Avoid trying to solve the problem without data.

2. Generate Alternative Solutions
Postpone the selection of one solution until several problem-solving alternatives have been proposed. Considering multiple alternatives can significantly enhance the value of your ideal solution. Brainstorming and team problem-solving techniques are both useful tools in this stage of problem-solving.

- Include all involved individuals in the generating of alternatives.
- Specify short- and long-term alternatives.
- Seek alternatives that may solve the problem.

A common mistake in problem solving is that alternatives are evaluated as they are proposed, so the first acceptable solution is chosen, even if it's not the best fit. If we focus on trying to get the results we want, we

miss the potential for learning something new that will allow for real improvement in the problem-solving process.

3. Evaluate and Select an Alternative
Skilled problem solvers use a series of considerations when selecting the best alternative. They consider the extent to which a particular alternative will solve the problem without causing other unanticipated problems.

- Evaluate all alternatives without bias.
- Evaluate both proven and possible outcomes.
- State the selected alternative explicitly.

4. Implement and Follow Up on the Solution
Leaders may be called upon to direct others to implement the solution, “sell” the solution or facilitate the implementation with the help of others. Involving others in the implementation is an effective way to gain support and minimize resistance to subsequent changes. Regardless of how the solution is rolled out, feedback channels should be built into the implementation. This allows for continuous monitoring and testing of actual events against expectations.

- Plan and implement a pilot test of the chosen alternative.
- Gather feedback from all affected parties.
- Establish ongoing measures and monitoring.

Overall, the Four-Step Model is a simple and reliable way to solve a problem. Using a creative, analytical approach to problem-solving is an intuitive and reliable process. It enables a thorough investigation of the problem and solution search. It involves implementers and users, and finds a justifiable, monitorable solution based on data.

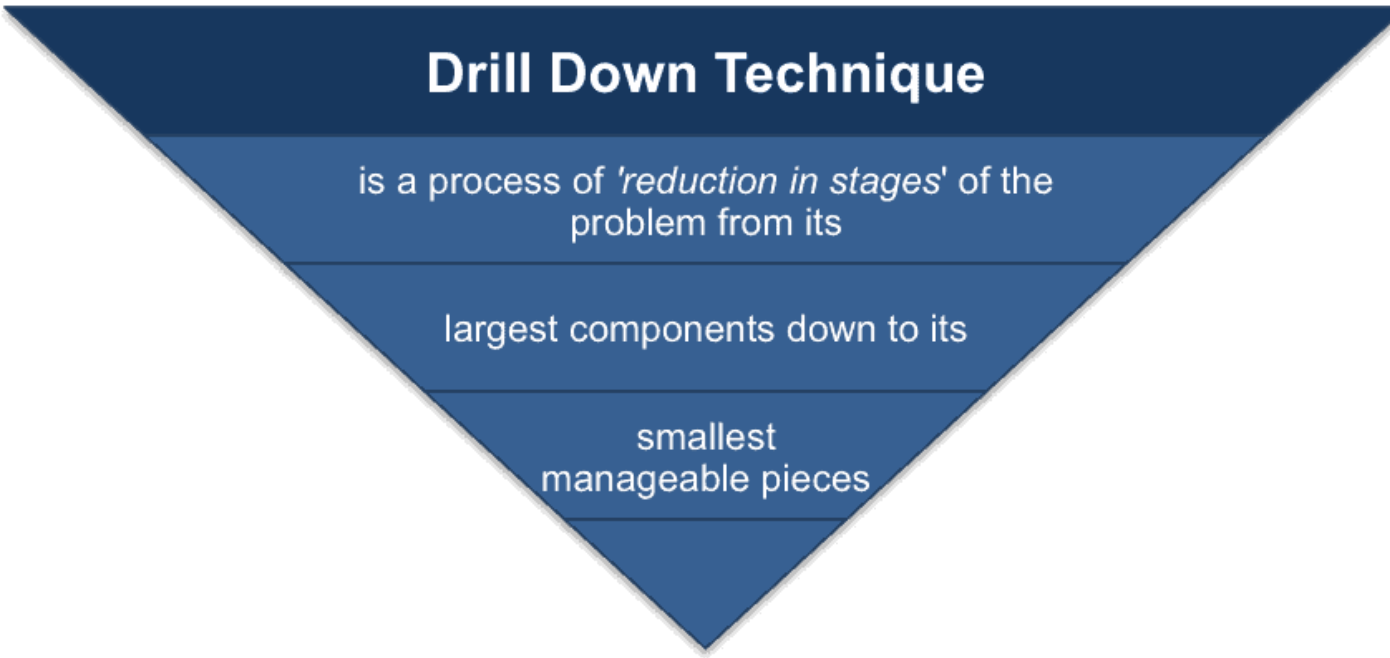
3. Tools and Techniques

You won’t be able to become an outstanding manager without the right toolbox. In this chapter, we will introduce the most important key problem-solving tools and techniques: The Drill-Down Technique, Four

Frame Model, CATWOE Analysis, 5 Whys Method, and Cause-and-Effect Analysis.

Drill Down Technique

In complex organizations problems are inevitable. Successful organizations take the time to identify these complicated problems and plan a practical resolution as soon as possible. The **Drill Down Technique** is a popular approach to problem-solving in complex organizations. As its name suggests you break down a complex problem into its various components into small practical pieces that enable you to identify a resolution.



To use the drill-down method successfully, you are going to need to have a plan. To start, write down the problem that you are facing in big letters at the top of the page. Try to sum up the problem in just a word or a short phrase, even if it is complicated in nature. This will be your starting point, and the rest of the drill-down process will take place from here.

Next, you are going to break down the problem into three to five smaller issues that make up the big problem. These points shouldn't be all the way down to the micro-level just yet, but rather they should be just one 'step' below the big problem itself. Once you have those points in place, work your way down another level to highlight a new list of problems that you need to address. This process will continue until you simply can't drill down any farther. Once you have reached what you consider to be the

bottom of your chart, you will be finished and you can begin to look for solutions among what you have created.

Drilling down the big problem that you are facing into a variety of smaller pieces is likely to lead you to some surprising results. For one thing, you are going to see that there is a lot more to this problem than you initially believed. Keep on drilling down until you have identified all of the factors contributing to the original problem.

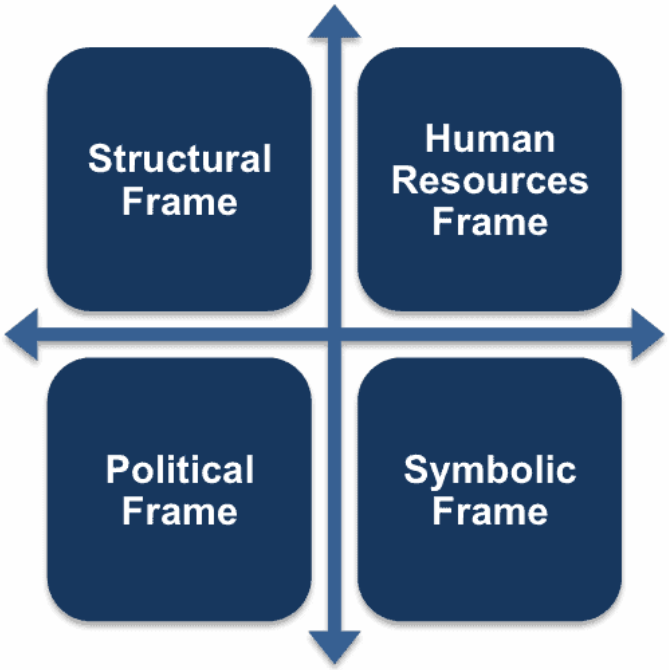
These methods don't necessarily offer a shortcut to a solution, but it really isn't a shortcut that you should be looking for – instead, you should be looking for a meaningful answer to a major problem that is threatening your business. Get to the heart of the problem, and you will get down to what it is that has been plaguing your company.

Drill down is a simple technique for breaking complex problems down into progressively smaller parts. If you use this method, keep on drilling down until you have identified all of the factors contributing to the original problem.

Four Frame Model

The **Four Frame Model** is a concept that divides up any given organization into 'four frames' – with the goal of understanding these organizations better when they are divided up in this manner. Lee Bolman and Terry Deal outlined their Four-Frame model in 1991. They stated that leaders and good managers should look at and approach organizational issues from four perspectives, which they called 'frames'.

Organizations are extremely complicated entities, with a potentially huge number of personalities, motivations, capabilities, limitations, and more at play. If leaders work with only one frame, they risk being ineffective. The Four Frames outlined by Bolman and Deal are: Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic.



Each of these frames plays a vital role in understanding the whole of an organization. If you were to look at just one or two of these frames on their own, the picture would not be clear and you would not necessarily have an accurate image of what the organization is doing today, or what it is capable of doing in the future. Therefore, if you are going to commit to using this model in the analysis of your own organization, you need to commit to using each of the frames in a meaningful way.

Structural	This frame focuses on the obvious 'how' of change. It's mainly a task-orientated frame. It concentrates on strategy; setting measurable goals; clarifying tasks, responsibilities and reporting lines; agreeing metrics and deadlines; and creating systems and procedures.
Human Resource	The HR frame places more emphasis on people's needs. It chiefly focuses on giving employees the power and opportunity to perform their jobs well, while at the same time, addressing their needs for human contact, personal growth, and job satisfaction.
Political	The Political frame addresses the problem of individuals and interest groups having sometimes conflicting (often hidden) agendas, especially at times when budgets are limited and the organization has to make difficult choices. In this frame you will see coalition-building, conflict resolution work, and power-base building to support the leader's initiatives.
Symbolic	The Symbolic frame addresses people's needs for a sense of purpose and meaning in their work. It focuses on inspiring people by making the organization's direction feel significant and distinctive. It includes creating a motivating vision, and recognizing superb performance through company celebrations.

Bolman and Deal proposed that a leader should see the organization's challenges through these Four Frames or 'lenses', to gain an overall view, and to decide which frame or frames to use. The leader may use one frame (implying a behavioral approach) for a time, and then switch to another. Or instead, the leader might combine and use a number of frames, or all four, at the same time.

A crucial aspect of Bolman and Deal's model seeks to avoid the temptation for leaders to become stuck, viewing and acting on conditions through one lens or frame alone.

Bolman and Deal assert that because no frame works well in every circumstance, then a leader who sticks with one frame is bound eventually to act inappropriately and ineffectively. Instead, it is the leader's responsibility to use the appropriate frame of reference, and thereby behavior, for each challenge.

Let's take a look at three short examples:

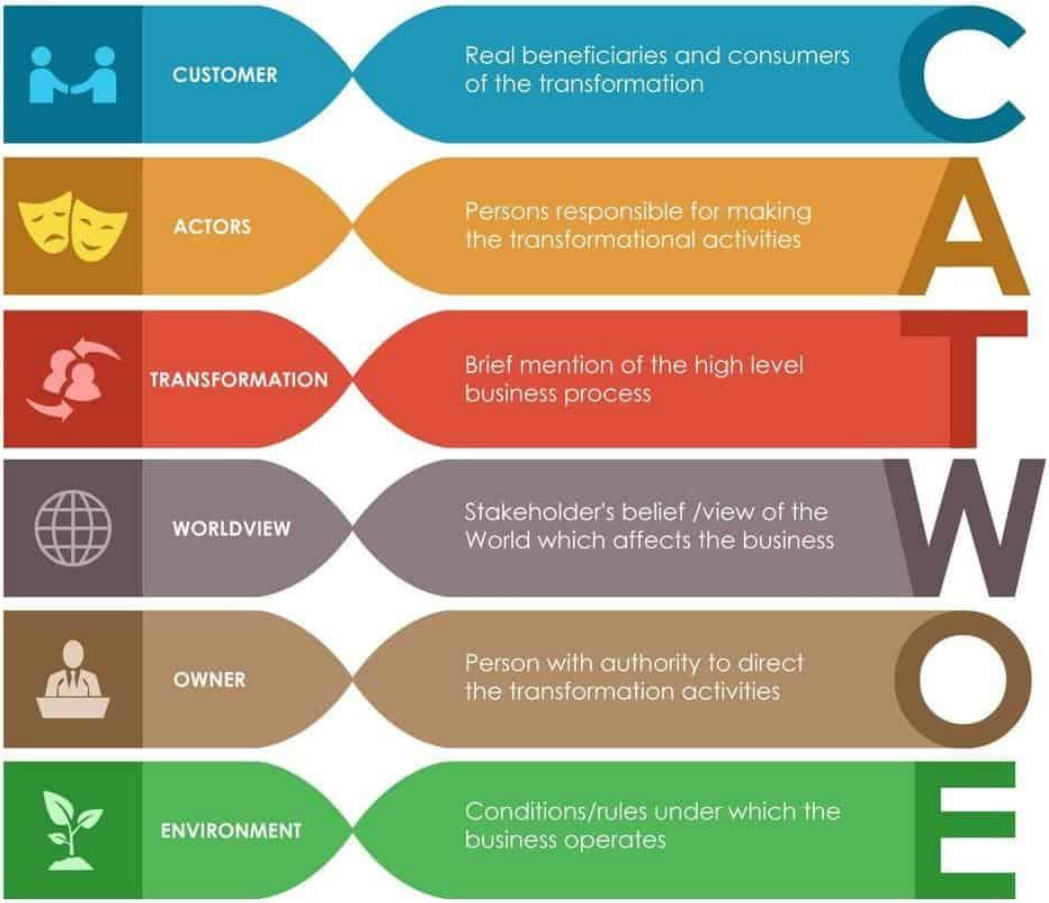
- Where a leader ascertains that the biggest problem in a group is **lack of motivation**, the leader should probably adopt a Symbolic and/or Human Resource approach.
- If the main group challenge is instead **confusion around responsibilities**, then the leader will be more successful in adopting Structural and Political orientation.
- If the group is experiencing **uncertainty about direction**, then Symbolic and Political leadership behaviors are more likely to produce effective results.

The Four Frames are an effective tool in large part because of how it forces you to look at your company or business from a variety of different angles. Rather than seeing things the same way over and over again – and coming to the same conclusions as a result – you are going to need to see things from a unique angle when you work through the Four Frames.

As long as you commit to the method and give it your full attention, you should come away with a far greater understanding of the organization as a whole.

CATWOE Analysis

CATWOE Analysis is a method of problem-solving that asks you to look at an issue from six unique perspectives. CATWOE is an acronym that stands for Customers – Actors – Transformation process – World view – Owners – and Environmental constraints. The CATWOE Analysis makes it possible to identify problem areas, look at what a company wants to achieve, and which solutions can influence the stakeholders.



To help you better understand how each of these six elements can come into play with regard to problem-solving, we are going to work through them one at a time below.

- **C – Customers:** Generally, these are the organization's customers. They are users and stakeholders of a system. The first step in the CATWOE Analysis is to identify the customers and understand how the process or system influences them.
- **A – Actors:** The actors are usually the employees within an organization. They ensure that a transformation process

happens. They're responsible for carrying out work and are involved with the implementation of changes in the system.

- **T – Transformation Process:** Transformation is the change that a system or process leads to. It's the process in which input (including raw materials and man-hours) is transformed by an organization into output (such as a final product or solution to a problem).
- **W – World View:** This is about the 'bigger picture' and considers the different stakeholders and interested parties from the environment surrounding an organization and the influence they can have. Stakeholders often have different approaches to the same issue, with conflicting interests.
- **O – Owners:** This usually refers to the owner, entrepreneur or investor of an organization, who wants to make changes and who decides whether a project should start or stop. As decision-makers, they have the highest authorities.
- **E – Environmental Constraints:** In contrast with World view, this is about the actual environmental elements that may influence the organization and can limit or restrict the system. Examples include ethical boundaries, regulations, financial constraints, and environmental factors.

A CATWOE Analysis provides insights into problems and the different perceptions that different audience groups have to come to solutions. A CATWOE Analysis enables you to gather all different standpoints in a common platform.

For example, an airport wants to reduce noise pollution that occurs when planes land on the runway. We can analyze that process with the CATWOE framework:

- Customers: Airlines and their employees will be affected by the change.
- Actors: Air traffic controllers and pilots will effect the changes.
- Transformation Process: By reducing speed before landing, airplanes won't have to brake as long on the runway and can decrease noise. To do so, different signals and instructions are given by air traffic control to the aircraft in the air.
- Owners: Airline companies and the airport have to implement the change.
- World View: The house owners near the airport, the aircraft owners, and airport management may all have different viewpoints based on their individual interests.

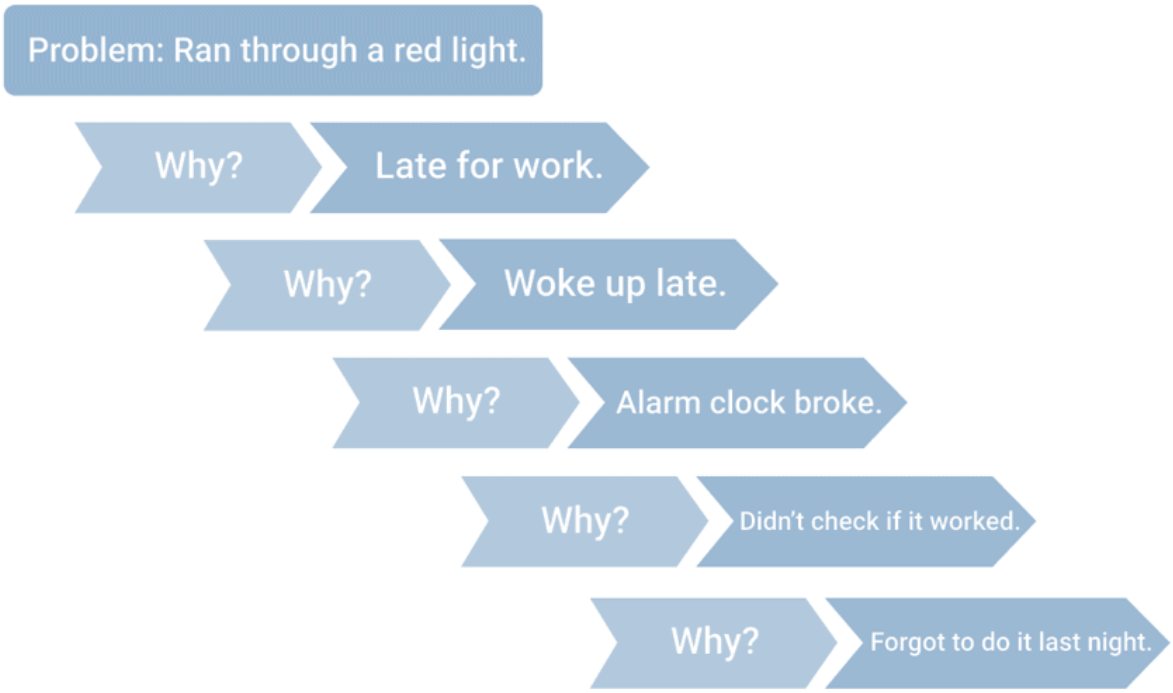
- Environment: The density of air traffic, weather conditions, geographical features, runway slots, and competition from other airports all influence the approach.

The CATWOE Analysis is used to identify and solve business problems that often involve multiple and conflicting interests. By considering all perspectives and standpoints, it offers an ethical framework for the problem-solving approach.

5 Whys Method

Solving problems on a superficial level can be a major mistake in business. You might think you are doing the right thing by solving a problem as soon as it pops up, but you may only be taking care of the top-level of a problem that runs much deeper. When that is the case, you will start to notice that this same problem comes up over and over again – likely costing you time and money in each instance.

Rather than dealing with the same problems over and over again, and making your business less efficient in the process, you should consider using the **5 Whys Method** in order to get down to the heart of the issue at hand. Basically, using the 5 Whys Analysis simply demands that you continue to ask 'why?' with regard to a problem until you get deep down to the root of the issue that you are facing.



While the number five is used in the title of this problem-solving technique, it will often be the case that more or fewer ‘whys’ are needed before the problem is solved. For example, some issues will only need to have the ‘why’ question asked two or three times before reaching a satisfactory solution, while other problems will require that you go six, seven, or even eight layers deep.

Your company didn’t send the firm’s newsletter for the latest software updates on time. Here is an example of applying the 5 Whys to this problem:

- Why didn’t we send the newsletter on time? The important updates were not implemented until the deadline.
- Why were the updates not implemented on time? Because the developers were still working on the new features.
- Why were the developers still working on the new features? One of the new developers didn’t know the procedures.
- Why was the new developer unfamiliar with all procedures? He was not trained properly.
- Why was he not trained properly? Because top management believes that new employees don’t need thorough training and they should learn while working.

You can notice that the root cause of the initial problem turned out to be something completely different from most expectations. Furthermore, it is obvious that it is not a technological, but a process problem. This is typical because we often focus on the product part of the problem as we neglect the human factor.

An important rule for the use of the 5 Whys Analysis is ensuring that it is processes and systems that are evaluated, rather than people. There are other mechanisms in place for evaluating the people within your organization (or, at least, there should be), so employees and others involved in the process should be left out of this matter. For now, you are looking only at how the system is performing, and how it may need to be improved.

Also, all the answers to the question of why need to be as precise and specific as possible. Since this method of analysis does not include a specific framework for how it is to be completed, there is a temptation or tendency to be somewhat general when coming to conclusions. Of course, general conclusions are not going to get you very far in business. Instead, make sure that all answers are as specific as possible, in order

to put yourself on track for a successful resolution of each problem that is addressed.

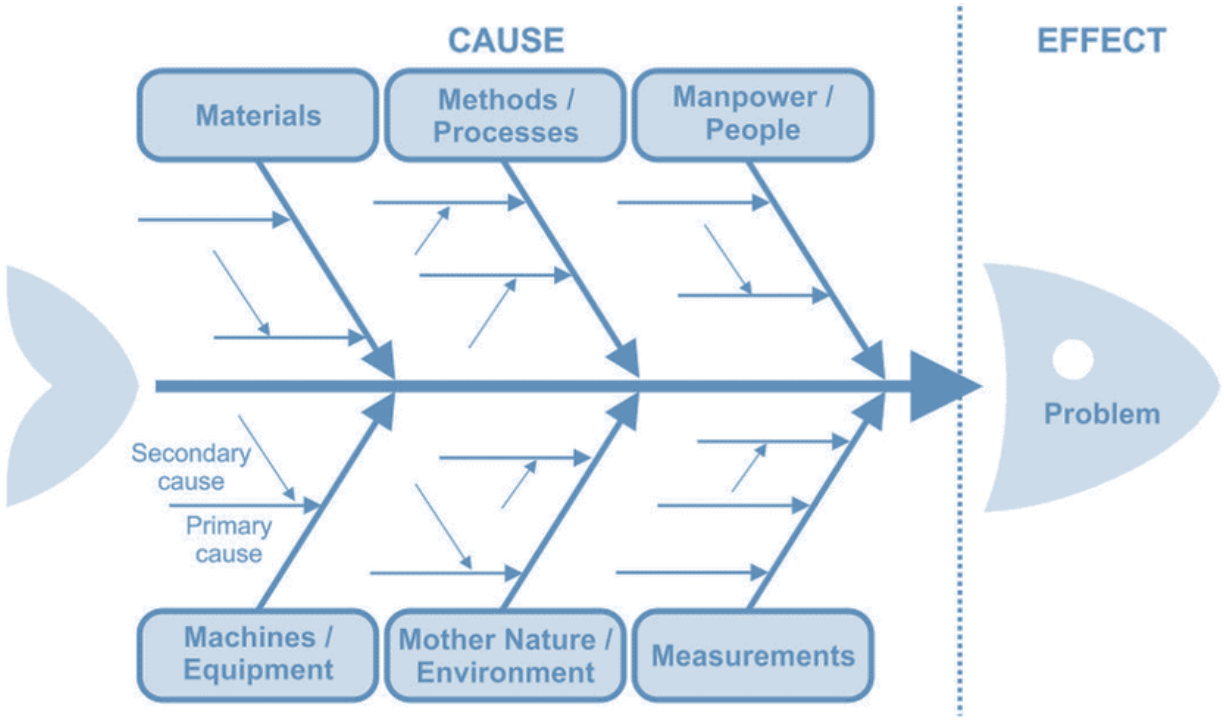
5 Whys Analysis is a technique used to explore the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem. The goal is to determine the root cause of a defect or problem by repeating the question ‘Why?’.

Cause-and-Effect Analysis

Cause-and-Effect Analysis is a technique that helps you identify all the likely causes of a problem. The diagrams you create with this type of analysis are known as **Fishbone Diagrams** because they look like the skeleton of a fish. The technique was developed by Professor Kaoru Ishikawa in the 1960s. His diagram was initially used for quality improvement but soon proved a highly effective problem analysis tool as well.

On the right-hand side of the Fishbone Diagram, the problem is described as “Effect” and on the left-hand side, the possible root causes are denominated into different categories. Here’s the best way how to build a Fishbone Diagram:

- Start by naming the main problem. This goes at the right head of the “fish” in your diagram.
- Make categories for causes and create the “bone structure” of your fish. Common categories include people, methods, measurements, materials, machines, and the environment.
- List possible causes under each category. For far-reaching or complex causes, it is possible to subdivide into sub-causes.
- The final step entails an analysis of the entire diagram, containing all the potential causes. Dependent upon complexity, the most likely causes may warrant closer inspection.



Don't be surprised if your Fishbone Chart becomes quite large as you continue to add potential causes to the various branches. Business problems tend to be rather complex, and there are many angles to consider when you are trying to figure out where things are getting off track.

A chart is only going to be helpful to your business if you actually take action on the results of your work. Once the chart is complete and you have a long list of causes to examine, the job then switches to looking through those issues until you decide what it is that needs to change.

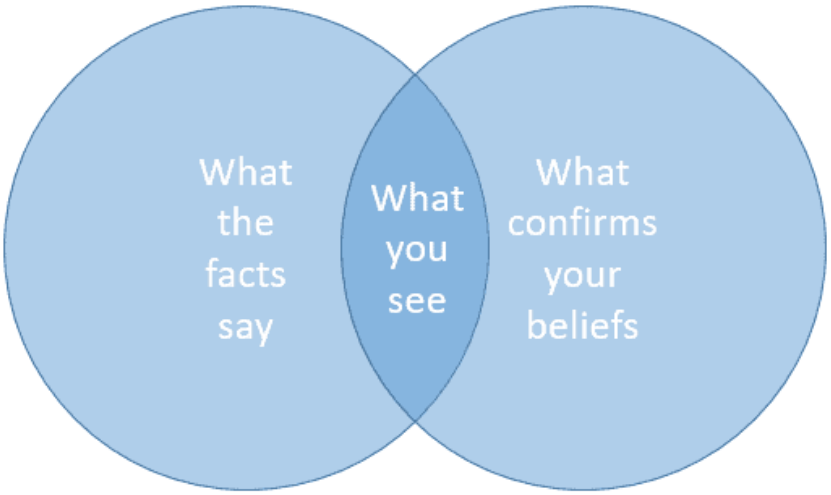
A Cause-and-Effect Diagram, often called a Fishbone Diagram, can help in brainstorming to identify possible causes of a problem and in sorting ideas into useful categories. The causes are usually grouped into major categories.

4. Common Barriers

Common barriers to problem-solving are mental constructs that impede our ability to correctly solve problems. In this chapter, we want to introduce four of the most common problem-solving obstacles as well as strategies on how to tackle these barriers.

Confirmation Bias

In psychology and cognitive science, **Confirmation Bias** is a tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions, leading to statistical errors.



Confirmation bias is a phenomenon wherein decision-makers have been shown to actively seek out and assign more weight to evidence that confirms their hypothesis, and ignore or underweight evidence that could disconfirm their hypothesis.

This can be the result of missing steps out, or not using them correctly. Basically, you would have found the solution before you found the problem, and perceive the problem-solving method through this lens (perspective and intellectual blocks). For example, if you feel you already know everything about the problem, you won't perform research or only research things that confirm the appropriateness of the solution you want to use.

Research has found that professionals within scientific fields of study also experience confirmation bias. An experiment conducted by the authors Hergovich, Schott, and Burger in 2010 suggested that professionals within the field of psychological research are likely to view scientific studies that agree with their preconceived notions more favorably than studies that clash with their established beliefs.

Mental Set

Mental Set describes one's inclination to attempt to solve problems in such a way that has proved successful in previous experiences.

However, such methods for finding a solution that has worked in the past may not be adequate or optimal for certain new but similar problems. Therefore, it is often necessary for people to move beyond their mental sets in order to find solutions.

The mental set barrier comes from relying too heavily on heuristics – the clichés of problem-solving, like a 'rule of thumb' or 'common sense' as a way to solve a problem, rather than actively looking for the best or simplest solution.

The heuristic for mental mindset could be called 'why reinvent the wheel'. It relies on previous experiences to direct how a problem can be solved. This could be an intellectual block, as the problem solver is not prepared to learn new problem-solving skills, and emotionally relies on familiarity to feel comfortable with a solution.

In an experiment by Abraham Luchins in the 1940s, participants were asked to fill one water jug with a specific amount of water by either employing a complex method that they learned before or by a simpler method that was completely new to them. Luchins discovered that his participants tended to use the same older technique that they had become accustomed to despite the possibility of using a simpler alternative.

Functional Fixedness

Functional Fixedness is a specific form of mental set and fixation: It can be described as the fixed design of an object hindering the individual's ability to see it serving other functions. Functional Fixedness prevents thinking creatively and it limits the ability for people to solve problems accurately by causing one to have a very narrow way of thinking.

Functional Fixedness can hinder one's ability to solve problems. Solutions to problems are not always clear. It is often necessary to think "outside of the box". Functional Fixedness prevents people from coming up with new ways of using familiar objects so that they can solve problems that may come up.

There is no way to completely eliminate Functional Fixedness. However, it can be somewhat combated by practicing creative thinking. Creative thinking allows one to see outside of the categories that they have created.

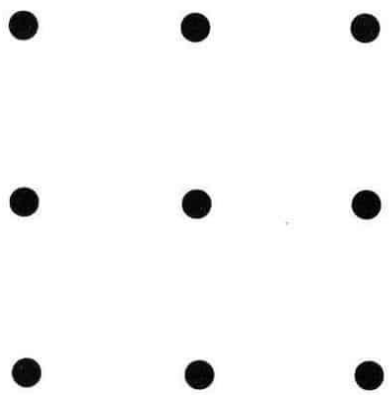
For example, you can use a big cereal bowl also as a soup bowl, a mixing bowl, or a fruit bowl. If you don't see the other functions of your cereal bowls and you decide to waste time and money to buy more bowls for eating soup, mixing salads and storing fruits, you are experiencing functional fixedness.

Unnecessary Constraints

Unnecessary Constraints are another very common barrier that people face while attempting to problem-solve. This particular phenomenon occurs when the subject, trying to solve the problem subconsciously, places boundaries on the task at hand, which in turn forces him or her to strain to be more innovative in their thinking.

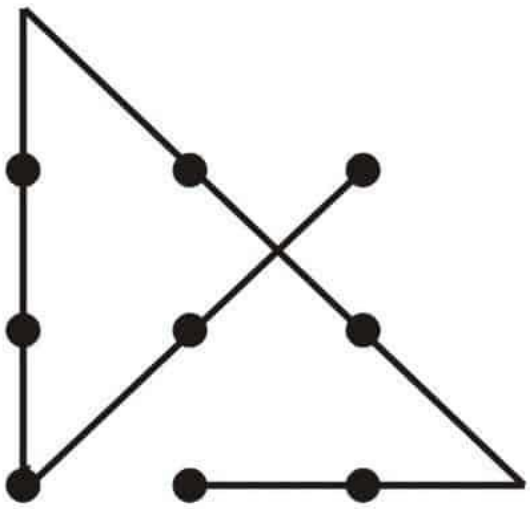
The solver hits a barrier when they become fixated on only one way to solve their problem, and it becomes increasingly difficult to see anything but the method they have chosen. Typically, the solver experiences this when attempting to use a method they have already experienced success from, and they can not help but try to make it work in the present circumstances as well, even if they see that it is counterproductive.

In the **nine dot problem**, there are nine dots lying on a grid three dots by three dots.



The solver is now asked to draw no more than four lines, without lifting their pen or pencil from the paper. This series of lines should connect all of the dots on the paper.

Then, what typically happens is the subject creates an assumption in their mind that they must connect the dots without letting his or her pen or pencil go outside of the square of dots. Researchers have often found a 0% correct solution rate in the time allotted for the task to be completed. The imposed constraint inhibits the solver to think beyond the bounds of the dots. Here is a possible solution to the problem:



It is from this problem that the expression “think outside the box” is derived.

Problems such as this are most typically solved via insight and can be very difficult for the subject depending on either how they have structured the problem in their minds, how they draw on their past experiences, and how much they juggle this information in their working memories.

2. The Four-Step Model

3. Tools and Techniques

4. Common Barriers

Confirmation Bias

Mental Set

Functional Fixedness

Unnecessary Constraints

Irrelevant Information

5. Better Decision Making

6. Conclusion

Problem Solving Skills -

Irrelevant Information

Irrelevant Information is information presented within a problem that is unrelated or unimportant to the specific problem. Within the specific context of the problem, irrelevant information would serve no purpose in helping solve that particular problem

Irrelevant information hinders problem-solving as it slows the process down, can cause confusion or misunderstandings. Irrelevant information makes solving otherwise relatively simple problems much harder.

People in brainstorming sessions often tend to go off-topic. This is why many brainstorming sessions have a facilitator to get things back on track. When gathering information, it can be getting distracted and looking at something that is interesting but not useful. It can result in too much information being collected, and people having trouble absorbing it.

For example, giving a problem-solving group full copies of all the information found in research, rather than summarizing it as headlines, a graph or a mind map causes a lot of irrelevant information.

5. Better Decision Making

Running a business requires the ability to make good decisions. One wrong choice can affect the entire company. While the basic principles might be the same, there are dozens of different techniques and tools that can be used when trying to make a decision. Here are some of the more popular options:

Decision Matrix

As you are probably aware, the best way to make an important decision is to work through the various options at hand one by one, weighing each based on a number of factors before coming to a conclusion. That style of decision making is commonly used in business, and it is represented in the **Decision Matrix Analysis** model.

Rather than using a pre-designed matrix – which may or may not be appropriate for your needs – you are going to create your own matrix when using this model. That way, the matrix will be completely customized to your needs, and it will be certain to help you land on a successful conclusion. The process might sound like a lot of work upfront, but it is actually relatively quick and easy to perform. Once you have a little bit of practice in building this kind of matrix, you will likely return to it time and time again in order to make your big decisions.

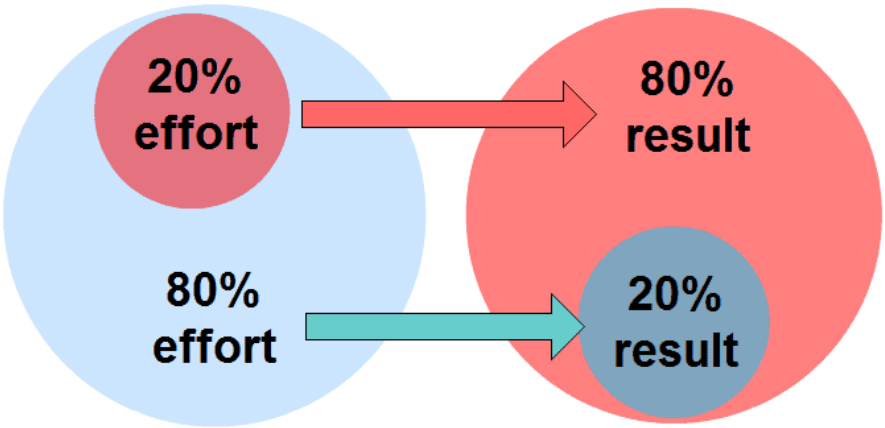
To create your decision-making matrix, you'll need to collect the various options in play for the decision. You need to be open-minded at first, keeping all options on the table – even if you don't think they will be the winner in the end. List the options that you have for this decision at one side of your matrix, and list the influencing factors across the other side. Within the matrix, rate each combination of option and factor on a scale of 1-5.

Simple Decision Matrix			
	OPTIONS		
Criteria	Car A	Car B	Car C
Cost	5	3	3
Practicality	2	4	3
Performance	4	2	5
Reliability	1	2	4
Fuel Economy	2	3	3
TOTAL	14	14	18

Once you have filled in each square on the matrix, add up the scores and see which option comes out on top. You might not necessarily go with the highest scoring option if there are other issues to consider, but this matrix will be a great way to get started listing your options in order of viability.

Pareto Analysis

Pareto Analysis is based on the famous Pareto Principle, which states that 20% of the work you do will generate 80% of the results you are looking for. In other words, there is not a direct 1:1 relationship between the work you do and the results you get. If you pick out the right work to do, you can achieve most of your desired results without doing anywhere close to all of the work. Obviously, the 20% – 80% relationship is not an exact measurement, but it does highlight the lopsided nature of the connection between work and results.



This relates to decision making because each day you have to decide how time is going to be spent – either your own time or the time of the members of your team. Efficiency directly correlates to the bottom line, like the way you spend time each day is going to dictate how productive the organization is as a whole. To use Pareto Analysis effectively, you are going to follow the steps below.

- **Find your problems.** Make a complete list of the problems you would like to solve in your organization.
- **Match uproot causes.** For each of those problems, do your best to identify and highlight a root cause.
- **Give the problems a score.** Not all problems are created equal – rate the problems you would like to solve, with the highest scores going to the most important issues.

- **Create groups.** Take some time to group your problems into like categories so you can attempt to solve more than one problem at the same time.
- **Score the groups.** The problem groups which have the highest total score are those which should be addressed first. This simple process will help you to make sure your time and attention are being spent on problems which are affecting the business in the most significant way.

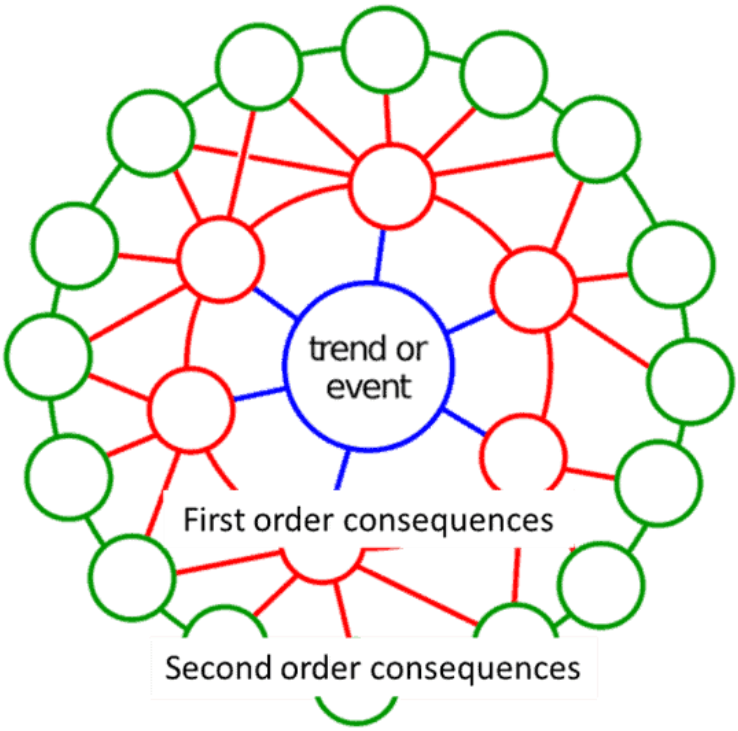
Pareto Analysis is based on the famous Pareto Principle, which states that 20% of the work you do will generate 80% of the results you are looking for. It is a useful technique for prioritizing problem-solving work so that the first piece of work you tackle simultaneously resolves the greatest number of problems.

Futures Wheel

This is a tool which was created in the early 1970s and remains very much relevant today. Before you make your next big decision, consider putting together a **Futures Wheel** to decide if you are heading in the right direction. The whole reason to think about how the future is going to be affected is the fact that you are considering a change of some kind. Maybe this is a change that is being forced upon you by market factors or other conditions, or maybe it is a change that you are initiating as a way to improve your organization.

Using this model starts by writing a proposed change in the middle of a sheet of paper – this will become the hub of your wheel. From there, you are going to move out to write down lower-level changes that would need to occur in order to achieve the main change that is the focus on this process.

The idea here is to move into deeper and deeper levels of change, one step at a time. You are building a wheel gradually, with the spokes getting longer as you think of more changes that could be made to support the main change in the middle.



The Futures Wheel is a simple, visual tool that helps you brainstorm the direct and indirect consequences of a decision, event, or trend. Once you're finished generating the wheel, you'll have a visual map that lays out all of the implications of the problem or event, allowing you to manage the situation appropriately.

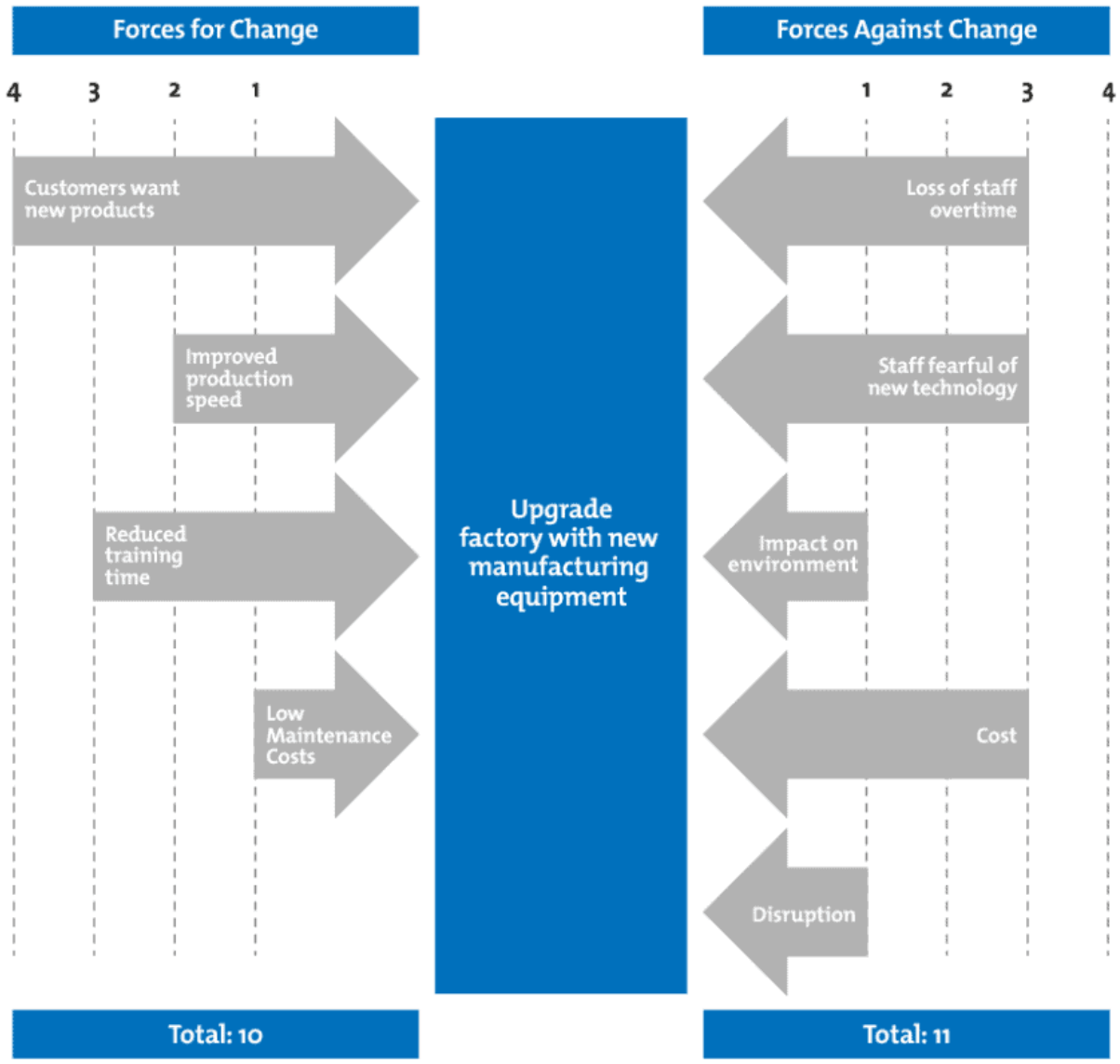
Force Field Analysis

In business, it is often the simple tools that are the most effective. That is certainly true in this case, as **Force Field Analysis** has been around for many decades and yet it remains a powerful tool to this day. When you are faced with making a decision that is going to impact the way your business moves forward, you might want to consider preparing a Force Field Analysis in order to determine whether or not you should continue with your plan. Doing this type of analysis is a great way to see both sides of a potential change, which is key in deciding how effective the change is going to be. Mistakes are made when only one side of a decision is considered, but that won't happen when Force Field Analysis is used properly.

To get started using a Force Field Analysis, the first thing you are going to do is write down your plan in the center of a sheet of paper. You should have clearly defined this plan before even getting started, as

having an ambiguous plan from the beginning is going to make it extremely difficult – if not impossible – to make an accurate assessment of the forces at play. Any business decision-making tool is only going to be as good as its inputs, so take the time to make a clear and well-defined plan before getting started on this process

Now that the plan is in place, you are going to create your Force Field Analysis by forming a simple chart with two columns – one with items working in favor of the plan, and one with items working against. You are going to list down on this chart all of the relevant 'forces' at play here, both for and against your idea. Once you have completed the lists, you are going to assign a value to each of these forces, based on its power.



Add up all of those scores to get the final tally in the ‘for’ and ‘against’ columns. If you find that the ‘for’ column receives a significantly higher score, it may be wise to pursue this plan. If the ‘against’ column wins out, however, you might want to table the concept for now.

Force Field Analysis identifies forces that drive change and forces that resist change. In order for change to occur the driving force must exceed the resisting force otherwise, there will be no change. By adding up the totals for and against, you can see how strong resistance is, where it is coming from and what you will need to address to get the change to happen.

6. Conclusion

Problem-solving consists of using methods in an orderly manner to find solutions to problems. Some of the problem-solving techniques developed and used in business, engineering, mathematics, or medicine are related to mental problem-solving techniques studied in psychology.

Most people take an unstructured approach to problem-solving and although this can be successful, the solution they come up with may not always be the best one. A major disadvantage of an unstructured approach is that it is easy to hit a roadblock and convince yourself that the problem cannot be solved or that your solution cannot be implemented for practical reasons.

Problem-solving is the **four-step process** of defining a problem, determining the cause of the problem, identifying, prioritizing and selecting alternatives for a solution, and implementing a solution.

Each of the **problem-solving tools** in this course approaches problem-solving in a different way. This can help you to find solutions that that might not be immediately obvious and to compare possible solutions before choosing the best one.

Barriers to Problem Solving are things that prevent individuals from identifying a practical resolution to a problem. They are often referred to as – cognitive blocks – how we think and feel – as well as, physical and social blocks. Every individual has their own specific cognitive blocks and these effect which of the barriers they will encounter. Being aware of problem-solving barriers helps us identify the best tools and techniques to use in our, or team, problem-solving activities to remove such pitfalls.

Each of the **decision-making techniques** we have included in this article has the potential to lead your business in the right direction. Of course, you will have to know when to use the right one at the right time, and when you need to use one at all. For instance, you probably don't need to use a complicated technique for a decision that you make several times a day – doing so would be overwhelming and unnecessary. Rather, these kinds of techniques should be saved for those choices which are going to have a meaningful and long-lasting impact on your business. When those types of decisions roll around, pick out your favorite of these valuable techniques and get to work making the best possible choice.

Welcome to Communication Skills!
The ability to communicate is an essential life skill and one that can be continually developed. Even if you are a naturally good communicator, there are always opportunities to enhance your communication skills.

This course will give you an overview of communication and introduces you to the main elements in the communication process. It also highlights the importance of producing clear, positive messages and offers you some basic tips and guidelines on this form of communication so that you may become more proficient in the kind of communication needed at home as well as in the college and workplace. You will also learn about some of the common pitfalls which may impede the effectiveness of business communication.

Communication is a learned skill. However, while most people are born with the physical ability to talk, not all can communicate well unless they make special efforts to develop and refine this skill further. Very often, we take the ease with which we communicate with each other for granted, so much so that we sometimes forget how complex the communication process actually is.

On completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify the key components of the communication process.
- Identify some typical problems that can arise in the communication process and demonstrate knowledge of skills to overcome these.
- Demonstrate increased awareness of forms of communication and social behavior.
- Identify and use strategies for managing specific contexts for communication, including giving presentations.

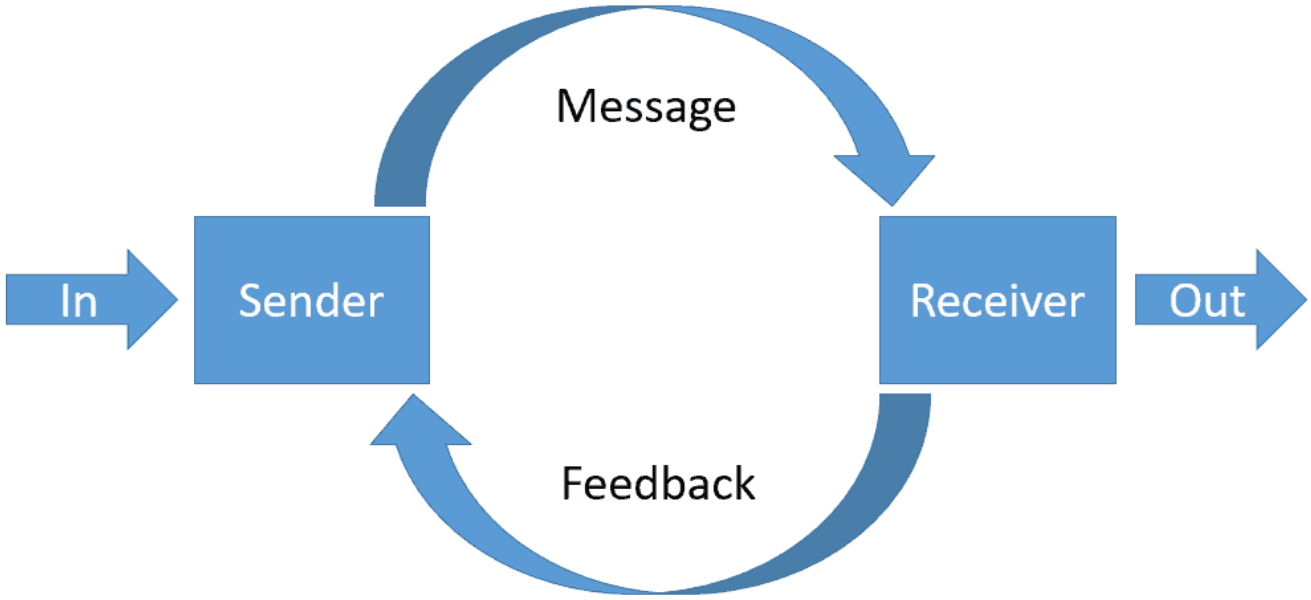
2. Communication Basics

The ability to communicate is an essential life skill and everyone has their own role and attitude that they naturally adapt and develop to suit the different environments they operate in. Now we will take a look at the most essential communication basics that will help you to become a better manager.

Communication Process

Have you ever wondered why some people can communicate so well while others fail to get their message across? What are the elements that must be present in the communication process before it can be successful and effective?

Well, communication has been defined as the act of giving, receiving or exchanging information, ideas and opinions so that the “message” is completely understood by both parties. Look at the figure below. The illustration shows clearly that in a communication process, there must be a sender who speaks or sends a message, and a receiver who listens or receives the message.



The sender sends a message with a certain intention in mind. The receiver of the message tries to understand and interpret the message sent. He then gives feedback to the original sender, who in turn interprets the feedback. This process, repeated continuously, constitutes communication.

Clearly, there are several major elements in the communication process – a sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback, context. There is both a speaker's intention to convey a message and a listener's reception of what has been said. Thus, listening skills are just as important as speaking skills in order for communication to be effective. This means that if you want to get your message across accurately, you need to consider these three things:

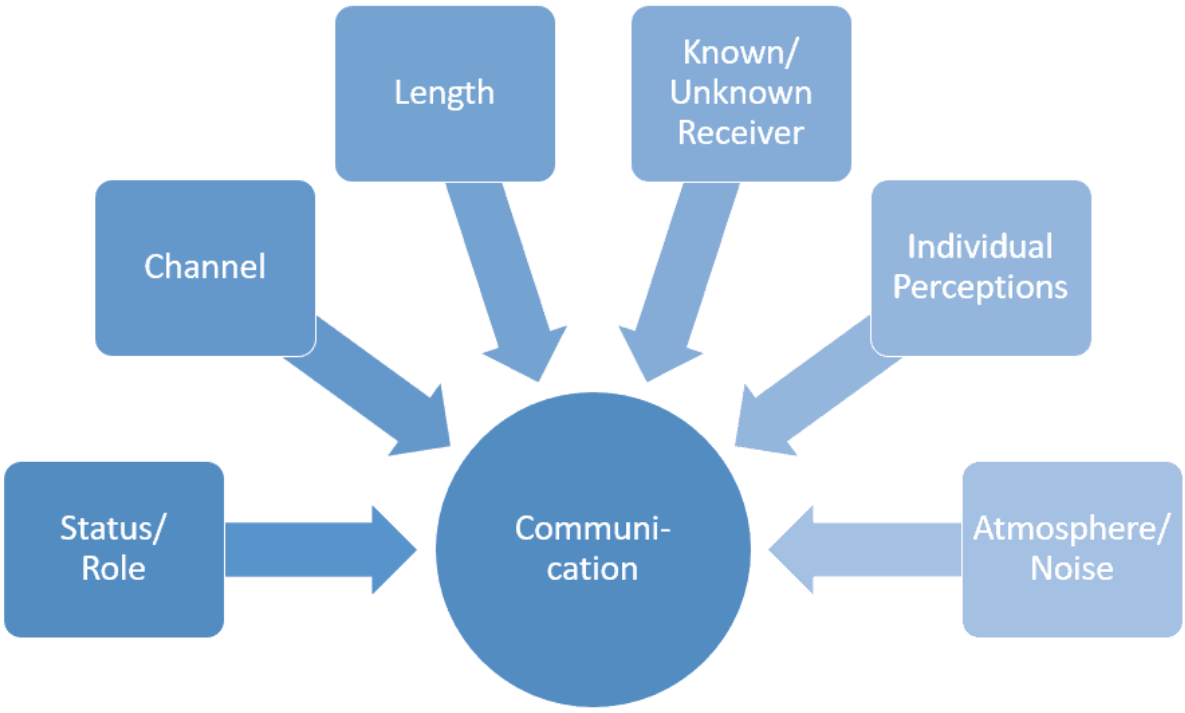
- The message;
- The audience or receiver; and
- How the message is likely to be received.

A message is only considered successfully communicated when both the sender and the receiver perceive and understand it in the same way. If this does not happen, then there may be a breakdown in communication, which may ultimately stand in the way of you realizing your goals, either personally or professionally.

Factors Affecting Communication

As mentioned before, effective communication is a two-way process but there are a number of factors which may disrupt this process and affect the overall interpretation and understanding of what was communicated. Problems can pop up at different stages of the communication process. These can relate to any of the elements involved: the sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback, and context. It is therefore important to understand some of the factors that affect communication so that you can try to get your message across with minimal misunderstanding and confusion.

Below are some possible problem areas that may turn out to to be barriers to effective communication:



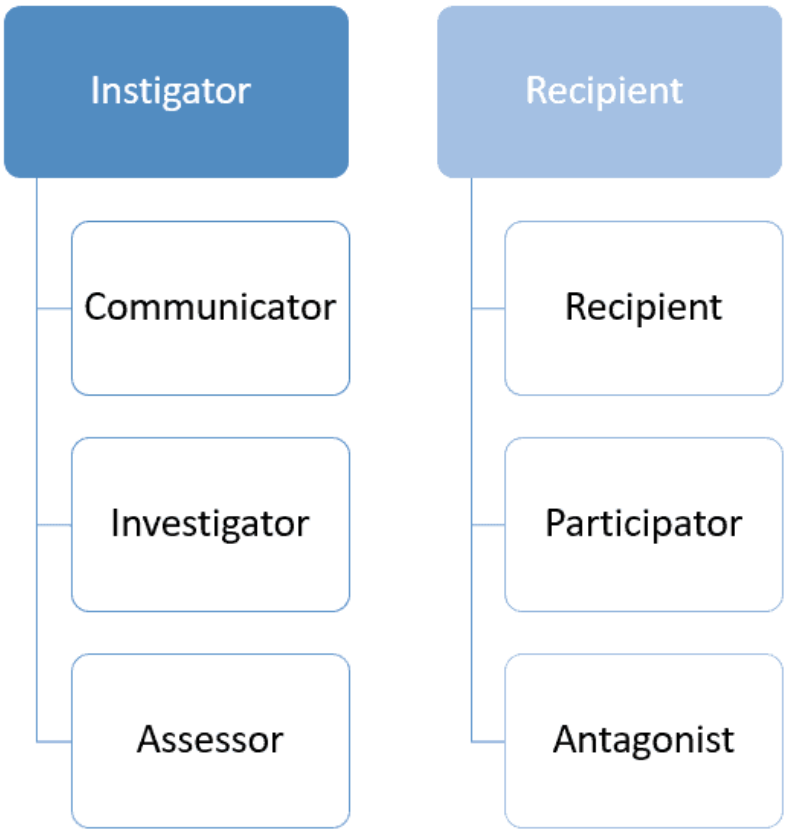
- **Status/Role:** The sender and receiver of a message may be of equal status within a hierarchy (e.g. managers in an organization) or they may be at different levels (e.g. manager/employee, lecturer/student, business owner/clients). This difference in status sometimes affects the effectiveness of the communication process.
- **Choice of Communication Channels**: Before you choose your communication channel, you should ask yourself whether the channel is appropriate for a particular purpose and the person/receiver you have in mind. Sending messages via

inappropriate channels can send out wrong signals and end up creating confusion.

- **Length of Communication:** The length of the message also affects the communication process. You need to be sure that it serves the purpose and is appropriate for the receiver. Is the message too long or too brief?
- **Known or Unknown Receiver:** Whether the receiver is known or unknown to you also plays a major role in determining the effectiveness of your communication. A known receiver may be better able to understand your message despite having insufficient information as both of you probably have common experiences and shared schemata. An unknown receiver, on the other hand, may require more information and time to decode the message.
- **Individual Perceptions/Attitudes/Personalities:** Sometimes, the method of communication needs to take into consideration the receiver's personality traits, age, and preferred style. The elderly and children, for example, have different communication needs and preferences when compared to young adults. Is the receiver of your message a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic sort of person? How do you think they will react to your message? Can you adapt your communication style to suit theirs?
- **Atmosphere/Noise/Distraction:** Our surroundings can sometimes pose as barriers to effective communication. A noisy place (a party, for instance) usually puts a strain on oral communication as both the sender and the receiver need to put extra effort to get the message across and ensure that it is understood clearly and correctly.

Communication Roles

In all areas of your life, you will play many **different roles in the communications process.** At the highest level within this process, you will either be the person instigating the exchange or the recipient of it.



An **Instigator** will generally be performing one of the following roles that will match the reason why communication is taking place:

- **Communicator:** You have a need to inform an individual about some aspect of their work or you require them to take on a task you need to delegate.
- **Investigator:** The reason for your communication is to find out some information or data that you need to make a decision.
- **Assessor:** You have to assess how well someone, or a group, is performing their role or task.

If you are the **Recipient** then the role you will adopt during the exchange will fall into three broad categories:

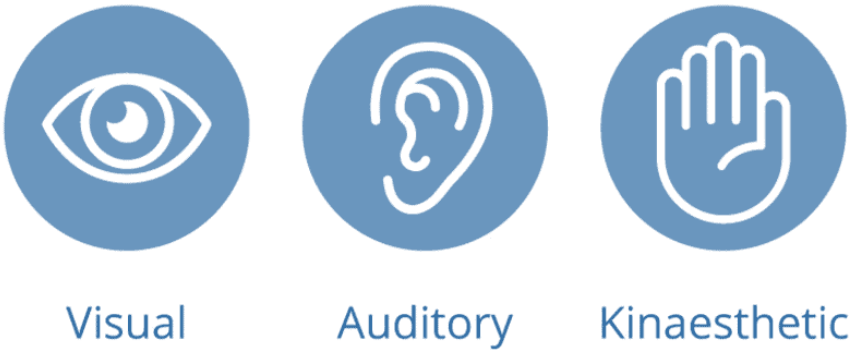
- **Recipient:** You need the information or data contained in the communication to ensure that you can complete your task or perform your job.
- **Participator:** Your knowledge and skills are required in a discussion or decision-making process that has mutual benefit to those involved in the communication.

- **Antagonist:** Your viewpoint may be contrary and you want to ensure that everyone in the communication is fully informed to ensure a well-reasoned decision.

With each of these broad roles, you will alter your behaviors and method of communicating to suit the environment and circumstance. But whichever high-level role you find yourself performing you will also need to **actively listen** to the whole of the two-way exchange. Developing the skill of active listening during conversations enables you to avoid misunderstandings, confusion, and misinterpretations. It also ensures that you are always looking at the 'big picture' when communicating.

Perceptual Preferences

You need to be conscious of the fact that different people prefer to receive information in different ways. That is, they may be naturally visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic communicators. This aspect of communication is especially important when you are delegating a task.



- **Visual** people retain information best when shown what is required. They will put into pictures what they read, hear, or are told.
- **Auditory** individuals will grasp what you mean when they are verbally told. They will use your tone, pitch, and other para-verbal signals to interpret meaning. They struggle to take in what they read unless it is supported by what they hear.
- **Kinaesthetic** people prefer to be given a demonstration of what is needed. They will remember what was done rather than what was said. They are happy to be moving or making contact when communicating.

These categories can also be dependent on the type of task you are asking someone to perform. For example, if a team member is having

difficulty with something, then it may be beneficial to use another way of getting the information across, rather than providing more detail using the same communication mode.

This doesn't mean you need to repeat your instruction in three different ways, but you may benefit from using a supplementary form of communication to ensure your message is correctly interpreted.

By communicating in a way that correlates with the individual's innate preferences you will ensure that your message is accurately received and interpreted. You should gather this knowledge as you observe your team perform their tasks and record how well they achieve their objectives.

The key to successful communications and delegation is that you retain control but give the individual the correct tools and support to perform the task. Your role is to focus on the required result and to give constructive feedback when monitoring indicates that more direction is needed.

Communication Principles

Communication is a **complex two-way process** that can involve several iterations before mutual understanding is achieved. Communication takes place in many ways. You can communicate using words, symbols, pictures, graphics, voice, tone, facial expressions, clothing, and body language. Most communication is a combination of these elements. By understanding how to use these elements effectively you can improve the way you communicate and achieve the best outcome for any situation.

Whether speaking formally or informally, addressing a meeting or writing a report, the **basic principles of communication** are as follows:

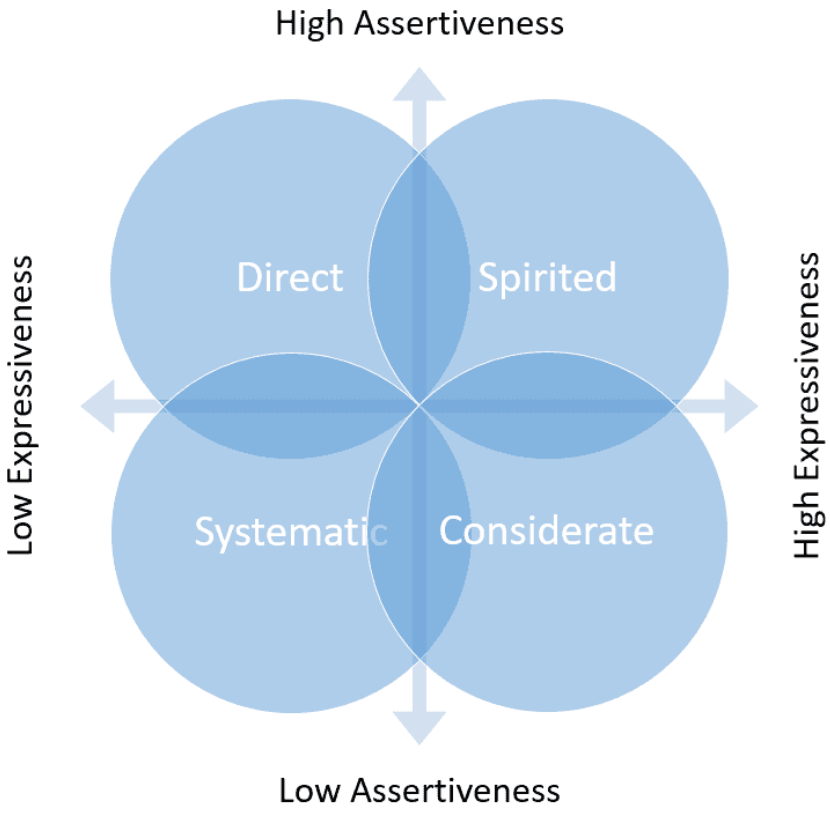
- **Know your audience:** Communication should always be packaged to suit the listener's level of understanding.
- **Know your purpose and topic:** Make it clear whether you are delivering specific information, requesting information, or being social. Be aware of all the facts and details.
- **Anticipate objections and present a complete picture:** Objections often arise due to misunderstandings. Communicate the benefits for both parties. Support your statements with evidence (e.g. statistics or testimonials).
- **Communicate a little at a time, then check the listener understands:** Pause, ask questions, and give the listener an opportunity to ask questions.
- **Present information in several ways:** What worked for one listener/reader may not work for another.
- **Develop practical, useful ways to get feedback:** Feedback is the best way to evaluate the effectiveness of your communication.

3. Communication Styles

The communication style refers to the choices we tend to make when communicating with others. It involves two basic dimensions: the **assertiveness level** and the **emotiveness level** of our communication. We use different styles depending on with whom we are communicating.

Communication Styles Matrix

There are many different models that describe the ways in which we communicate. But one very useful model is based on the work of Dr. Eileen Russo. Her matrix is displayed in the figure below. It shows that there are two different dimensions in communication styles: the level of expressiveness and the level of assertiveness.



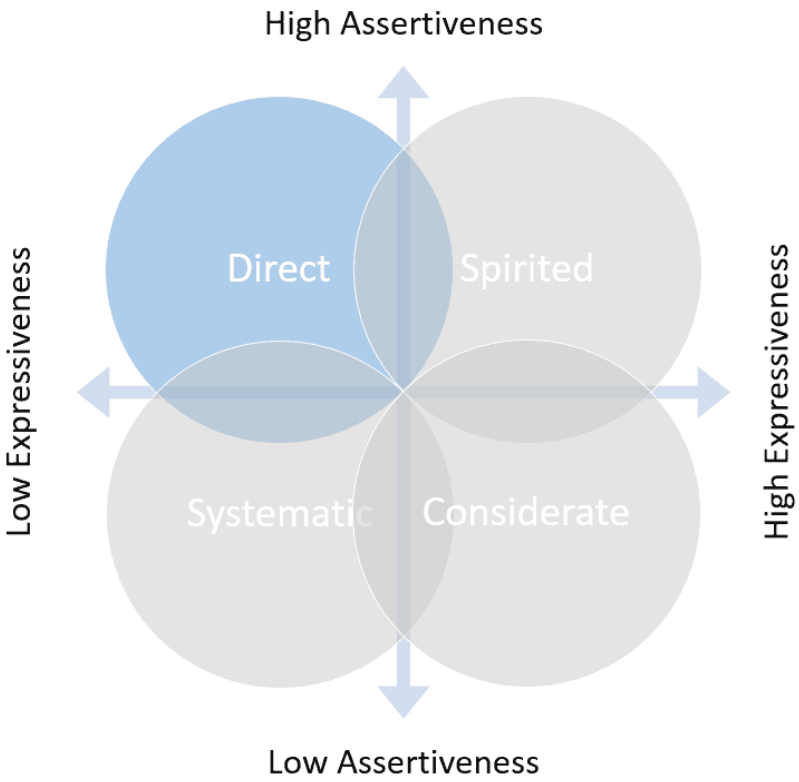
Each quadrant in the figure above represents a different communication style. People can fall anywhere within each quadrant, becoming more uniformly one style over the others as they move further from the center.

Notice that the more **assertive** communication styles tend to 'tell' others what to do. The less assertive communication styles tend to 'ask' others what should be done. The more **expressive** communication styles tend to show their emotions in their face, speech, and tone. The less expressive styles will either not express their emotions or will work to hide them.

The resulting four basic communication styles are shown below. In the following sections, we'll look at the basic characteristics of each communication styles and some things you can do to help you communicate well with each type.

- Low Expressiveness + High Assertiveness = Direct
- High Expressiveness + High Assertiveness = Spirited
- Low Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness = Systematic
- High Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness = Considerate

Direct Communication Style



As indicated in the communication style matrix, people with a direct communication style are highly assertive and not expressive. They tend to tell others what to do instead of asking others what they think should be done, and they will not easily show emotions in their communications with others. Their communication style is meant to be expedient, though others may not always see it that way. They may appear terse and cold to others, who might take their style of communicating personally.

Direct communicators will try to tell you as little as possible before moving on to the next topic – not because they are trying to be evasive, but because they are trying to save time. They won't always stop to listen to others, even if the others have something valuable to contribute. They may seem impatient and overbearing at times, but it's not meant to be personal. They are attempting to focus on results rather than emotions. They will speak their minds, even if it could be off-putting to others.

Don't expect them to talk about their personal lives – they like to keep business and personal issues separate. They don't back down from conflict, and at times could be seen as being aggressive rather than assertive in the way that they express their opinions.

Tips for communicating if you have a direct communication style:

- Make an effort to listen fully to others and avoid interrupting
- Allow time for 'chatting' at the beginning of a meeting
- Recognize that others may feel the need to express their emotions about topics
- Recognize that brainstorming can be helpful and not just a 'time waster'
- Try to communicate your expectations for how a meeting will go – the length of time, the topics to be covered, and the expected results – before a meeting occurs
- Take the time to show your appreciation for others' contributions
- Don't use email for sensitive or complicated topics
- Allow time in your schedule for questions and feedback

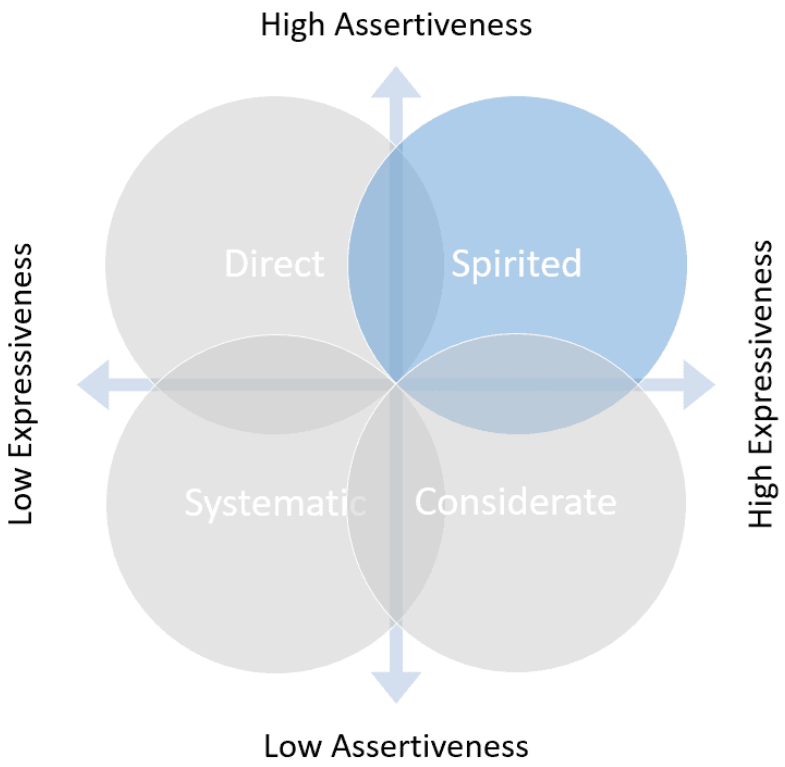
Tips for communicating with people with a direct communication style:

- Ask if they have time to talk before jumping in
- Get to the point quickly – don't bore them with lots of background information
- Limit 'chatting' or conversation that is off-topic

- Use short, direct sentences
- Ask for a specific call to action or make a specific request
- Do not speak in the abstract
- Only promise what you are certain you can deliver
- Don't give or ask for information about personal issues unless they initiate it
- Don't sugar coat things – speak plainly

People with direct communication styles are the 'go- getters' in the group. They will work hard and fast and will brook few questions or distractions. These people need to use caution to avoid appearing dictatorial or cold. If you are a direct style, you could probably use some practice with listening skills.

Spirited Communication Style



People with the spirited communication style are very interested in the 'big picture'. They are the dreamers, the inventors, and the innovators in the group. Their communication may be full of grand ideas and hyperboles that tend to be very persuasive to others at first.

However, they are not always very good at discussing the details or the exact steps in the process. They will tend to go off on tangents in their

conversations and like to interject anecdotes into their dialogues in order to demonstrate or drive home a point.

Keeping to an agenda is sometimes a challenge for those with the spirited communication style since both time management and remaining focused are challenges for this group. Their written or verbal communication may tend towards the dramatic. While they can be very entertaining, getting them to communicate clearly on specific topics may take the assistance of someone else to guide them through a conversation and keep them on track by bringing them back to the subject at hand.

Tips for communicating if you have a spirited communication style:

- When considering new ideas to share, also consider whether or not you have suggestions on how to put those ideas into action
- Respect agreed-upon agendas and time limits when in meetings
- Try to limit your sharing of personal anecdotes that take the group off-topic
- Make sure you are allowing others to contribute their ideas and suggestions – and that you are listening
- Be certain any requests you make are clear and that you convey the reason for asking
- Communicate your appreciation for others' work and input

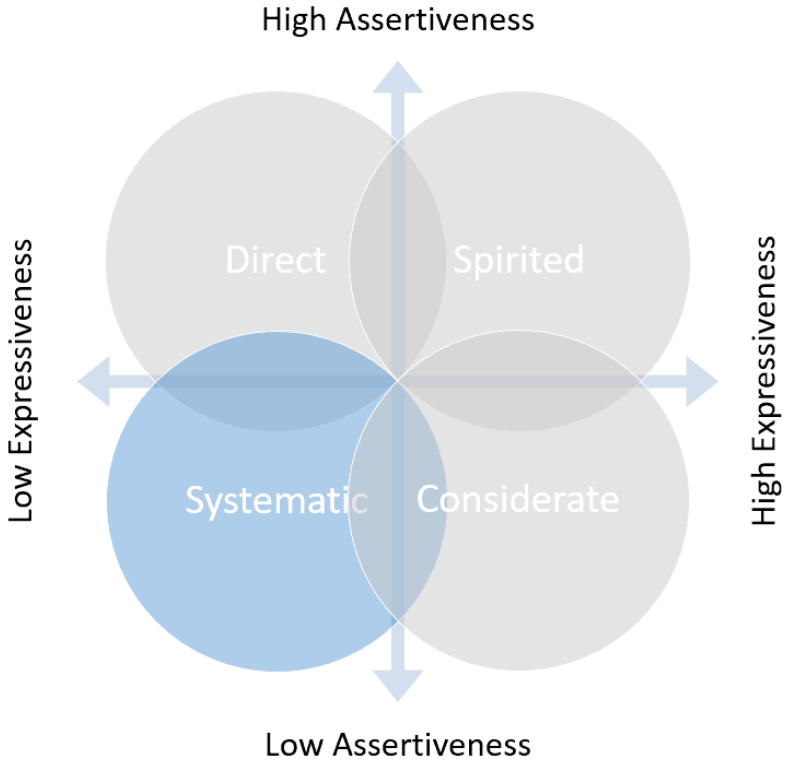
Tips for communicating with people who have a spirited communication style:

- Use an agenda with time limits listed for each topic
- Praise them in front of other people
- Learn to gently redirect the conversation back to the topic at hand
- Understand that they may exaggerate
- Challenge them to break down their 'big ideas' into specific outcomes and steps
- Reaffirm with them what they have agreed to do
- Use check-lists or other written reminders as a way to help communicate what needs to be done

People with the spirited communication style love to flesh out ideas, brainstorm, and talk about the big picture – as long as they get to do a lot of the talking! Spirited people can have a hard time nailing down the

details in their wonderful ideas. They may also have a hard time sticking to an agenda or to one topic.

Systematic Communication Style



Those with a systematic communication style like to focus on facts and details rather than opinions and possibilities. Expect to use and appreciate logic when you communicate with a systematic. They will appreciate facts and analysis rather than the 'big picture' ideas that have not yet been proved useful.

They may be slower to respond to your communication, as they are probably analyzing the situation and constructing a logical, well thought-out response. Charts, graphs, and trends are all useful tools for communicating with systematic people as well.

Those with a systematic communication style are uncomfortable with expressing their feelings about things and do not like conflict. They may tend to shut down communication rather than dealing with emotional or confrontational situations. If you give them directions, you will need to be very thorough and precise in relaying them.

The more information you can give them, the happier they will be – as long as the information is relevant to the current discussion or is relevant background information.

Tips for communicating if you have a systematic communication style:

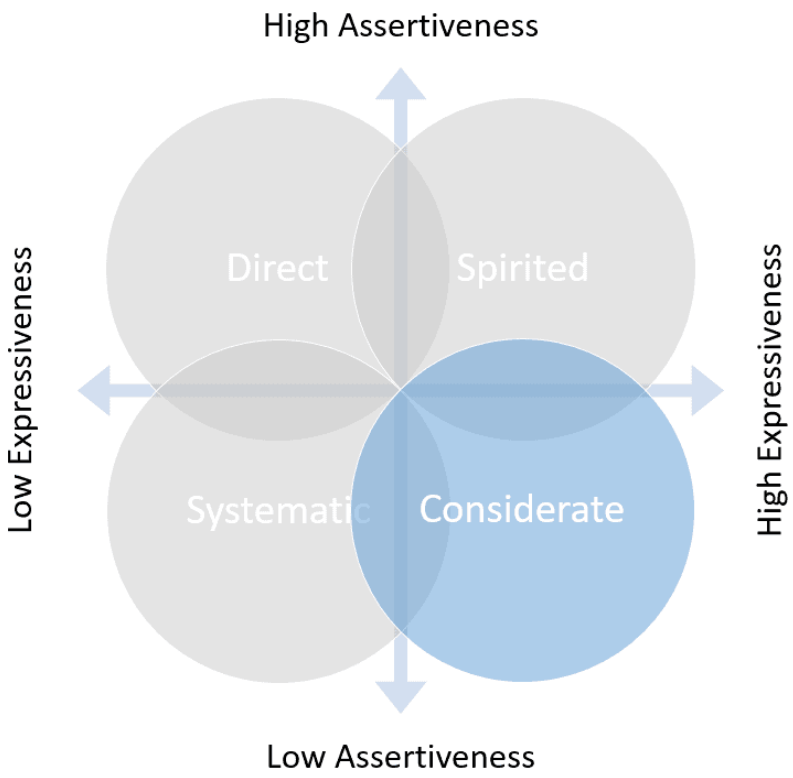
- Recognize that not everyone follows linear thought processes and decision-making
- Realize that for good working relationships, consideration for others' feelings is important
- Learn to ask qualifying questions that will help you get the information you need
- Ask others questions about themselves if you want to build rapport
- Make sure you understand the scope of a project so that you don't waste time collecting information that is not going to be needed
- If you need to ask for more time for analysis, be able to explain the benefit of the information you are working on

Tips for communicating with people with a systematic communication style:

- Focus on the facts of the situation rather than individuals' opinions
- Speak with precision and accuracy rather than generalizations
- Be organized, on time, and on topic when you communicate with them
- Give logical reasons for your actions and for what you ask of them
- Allow them time for research and analysis before decision-making
- Avoid personal topics unless they open the conversation

People with a systematic communication style will focus on facts over opinions. Communication with tangible evidence is best for systematic. They will likely be uncomfortable expressing feelings and will tend to avoid confrontation.

Considerate Communication Style



Those with the considerate communication style are very concerned about the feelings of others. They want to please other people and to be included in their peer group. They like to work with others, help others, and connect to others on a personal level. If there is conflict in your group, they will be the ones to attempt to mediate it.

They want everyone to have the chance to speak their minds, have their turns, and receive recognition for their contribution. They are natural trainers and counselors and enjoy helping others to succeed. They will encourage group collaboration and communication, though they are not always inclined to speak their own minds.

This is the major communication challenge for those with the considerate personality style – they may be reluctant to share an opposing opinion, even if it's important information because they are concerned about keeping the peace and being liked.

They are also inclined to take direct communication as a personal matter. It's difficult for them to separate other peoples' opinions about a topic from their opinions about them, and so may feel that an opposing opinion is due to not liking them. There is also the possibility that they will be talked into something in order to preserve the peace rather than standing their ground.

Tips for communicating if you have a considerate communication style:

- Recognize that other people's opinions about a topic are separate from their opinions about you
- Realize that not everyone is comfortable discussing personal topics with work colleagues; allow others to open personal topics before asking questions
- Respect your own opinion as you respect others' opinions
- Recognize that you don't have to be friends with everyone, but you should treat others and be treated professionally

Tips for communicating with people who have a considerate communication style:

- When possible, reassure them that your opinions are not personal
- Express a sincere interest in their feelings, thoughts, and personal life
- Encourage them to ask questions and share their opinions
- Let them know that you appreciate their help
- Resolve any conflicts quickly

People with a considerate communication style will be very interested in listening and in finding out how you and others are doing. They will want everyone to have a chance to speak but might refrain from expressing their own opinions if they think it will displease others.

Examples

It will take some time and practice to learn exactly what will work in communicating with the people in your workgroup. Here are a few examples that will help you to get started:

Direct Style:
When communicating with someone who has a direct communication style, the key is to get to the main point of your communication as soon as possible and to do so in the most efficient manner possible. The first example below shows the type of communication that will not work with someone who has a direct communication style:

Hi Jane,

I heard from Alex that you landed a new large business account yesterday. He said that you did an excellent job in explaining the company's benefits to the customer and that you were very professional. Alex also said that the customer asked for a quote on a new phone system for his existing offices. Have you thought about how you will proceed? Let me know if I can help you get the quote together or if you need any ideas on the configuration. I'd like to get the quote to them later this week if you think you can manage it. That way we would have a good chance of getting the order in for this month's numbers.

What is the main point of the communication? What is the requested action? How much of the communication is superfluous information? A person with a direct communication style will not necessarily glean what you want them to do or by when. They will appreciate the accolade, but they won't appreciate the personal references or information.

Hi Jane,

Great job on the new account. I'd like to meet for 10-15 minutes tomorrow to discuss strategy and timing. Please let me know if you'd prefer to meet at 1:00, 1:30, or 2:00 pm.

See the difference? The second text still communicates approval and makes a request, but it does so in a much clearer way. If it seems curt to you, don't worry – the direct style person will appreciate it. It's a perfectly professional communication and there is much less chance for misunderstanding.

Spirited Style:
When communicating with someone who is spirited, you will find that consistency is important. If you can get them used to a particular format or method of communication, it will be easier to keep them communicating. This doesn't mean always choosing email or always choosing telephone. But it does mean always using follow-up questions or checking in on a regular basis to see if you are both still on the same page.

Also, remember that a person with a spirited style may need more time to brainstorm and discuss ideas. If you want them to come to the table with decisions already made, be sure to get their buy-in beforehand. Otherwise, they may still find the need to discuss something that you already felt was decided.

Here's an example of good written communication to a spirited person.

Hi Sally! I thought your presentation yesterday was fantastic! I enjoyed the way that you had the audience participate in the session. I think you would be a great choice for the educational component at our next board meeting. The Board of Directors needs some information about local economic trends, but in a way that is not too boring or complicated. Would you like to have lunch to discuss it? I'm free on Thursday or Friday this week. Let me know if either of those days will work for you.

Why would this communication work for a spirited person? It is enthusiastic, complimentary, and would be flattering to Sally. She will be pleased that you noticed her first presentation and more pleased that you would like her to repeat it.

Systematic Style:
When you need to communicate with a person who has a systematic communication style, remember that facts are what to emphasize. Opinions are not going to be very effective. Use logical, linear thinking and communicate in the same way and let data do the talking for you as much as possible. Have charts? Know some trends? Have examples to show how something works? All of these can be useful in communicating with a systematic person.

When communicating with a person who has the systematic communication style you should avoid phrases like:

- It's my opinion that…
- I believe that…
- I feel that…

Instead, try using phrases like:

- The data shows that…
- The trends show that…
- The results of the test show…

Considerate Style:
To best communicate with someone who is a considerate communication style, remember that the person's feelings are going to be important. They will listen best when you make them feel as if their feelings are important to you, their opinion is important to you, and that you value them as a team member and a contributor.

If you have something to communicate that will perhaps be perceived as a critical, you will need to tread cautiously in order to be effective. Let the person know that you appreciate their work, and name the aspects that you find valuable and good. Then note the changes that need to be made, explaining the reason for the changes as much as you can. Whenever possible, use requests instead of imperatives in discussing the needed changes.

4. Communication Tips

In this chapter, we will discuss several general tips for improving your communication skills. So whether you're looking to get ahead in the job market — or within your company — your ability to communicate will make you stand out from the crowd!

Wording

You can really undermine your relationships and generate negative reaction by choosing the wrong words at the workplace. It is important to be sensitive to how different words will be received by our listeners.

- **Always:** A word like 'always' can easily be perceived as an attack on the listener. When you are trying to improve a situation, it's much better to choose a softer approach, looking for a win-win solution.
- **Never:** Saying to someone, "You are never on time!" will not be as effective as telling your employee, "I've noticed you've not been getting to work on time a lot lately. Are you having any difficulties we can discuss?" They won't feel attacked, and you can take the conversation
from there.
- **Should:** This is another dangerous word. For example, "You should have brought an umbrella!" That's a bit ridiculous when you're soaking wet already. Even when people ask for advice on what they should do, it's more motivating to use empowering

language like, “You might want to try…” or, “Perhaps you can…” rather than “you should.”

- **But:** The word but can be seen as a negative. It can erase everything positive that came before it, and the listener will focus on the negative.
- **Compare:** “This model is very popular, but it only does 35 miles per gallon… This model is very popular, and it does 35 miles per gallon.” You can immediately see how positive the second sentence sounds, and how there is no change in the information, only in the attitude. Sometimes it will be essential to use ‘but’; just be aware of its negative implications and consider if an alternative would be more appropriate.
- **Maybe:** Always think carefully before using weak words like ‘try’, ‘maybe’, ‘perhaps’. They don’t give any sense of commitment, only uncertainty. “I’ll try to get this finished today,” gives you an excuse if you somehow can’t work on it. (“Well, I tried, but it didn’t work!”) “Maybe I’ll drop over to your place is evening.” This will leave me wondering whether you will or not.
- **You must:** Phrases like “You have to…”, You must…”, “You’d better…” are very demanding. They make people feel like they have no choice.
- **Can’t:** Negative words like ‘no’, ‘can’t’, and ‘don’t’ shut down discussions and stir up negative feelings. It’s best to avoid them where possible.

Always and never are two words that you should always try never to use! Hmm! It’s true, though. Imagine you say to a colleague, “You never get to work on time.” She might reply with, “Two Wednesdays ago, I was 5 minutes early!”

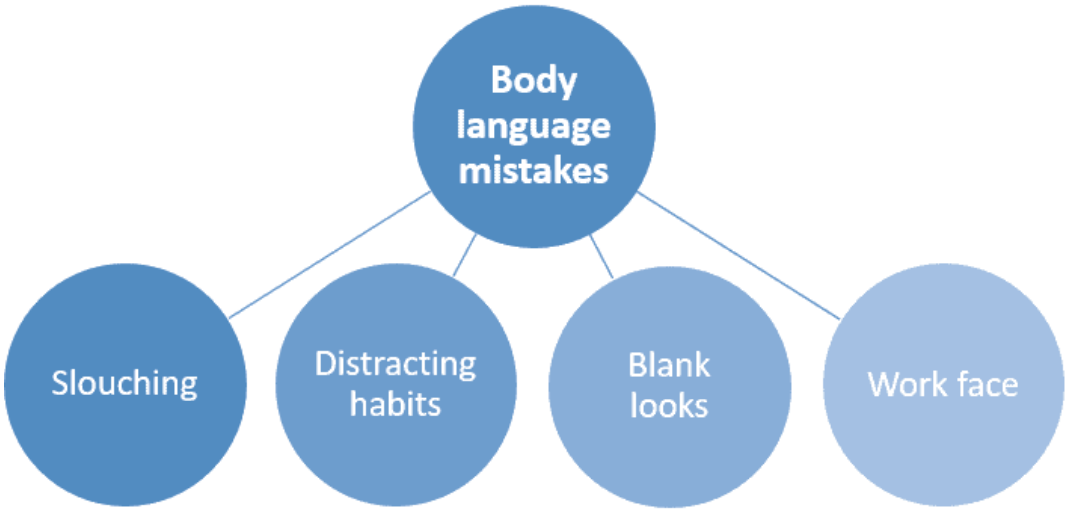
Body Language

Do you twist your hair or play with your rings? This could imply that you’re nervous or not focused. Do you point a finger at the other person’s chest? This implies aggression. Do you slouch? This implies a lack of confidence. Do you hop from foot to foot when talking to your manager? This shows a lack of confidence too.

Even if you’ve structured your message well, you could blow it completely if your posture, gesture, and facial expressions don’t support your message. In communication, your body language can be one of your best assets, as long as you use it well. To start with, be aware of what your body is doing and saying.

By making some minor adjustments in your posture, your gestures and your facial expressions, you will help yourself become a much better communicator. Your face and your body language can be two of the greatest tools in your communication toolbox. Use them well to help you come across as a confident, relaxed communicator.

Here are four behaviors you may want to work on:



- **Slouching:** Some big, comfortable chairs are very easy to slouch in, but when you do this, you may look too relaxed and informal. People may not take you seriously. If you want to come across as an assertive, confident communicator, it's best to sit up, and stand up, straight.
- **Distracting habits:** Please avoid annoying distractions like twisting your hair, playing with rings, or clicking your pen they will make the listener pay attention to your habits, and form judgments about them, rather than focus on your message.
- **Blank looks:** A blank look is one that shows no expression or emotion. The only time blank looks will help you is when you are playing poker! When trying to convey an important message, blank looks will make you appear indifferent. Use your face to show expression both when receiving and giving messages.
- **Work face:** When you're at your desk concentrating on your work, your brow may be furrowed and your lips pursed. If your assistant walks in at this point, and you look up still wearing this 'work face', he might think your face is saying, "What the heck do you want? How dare you interrupt me!" If you think you might be guilty of wearing your work face, just take a moment to relax and adopt an open expression when people knock on the

door. This way, people will feel more comfortable coming in to talk to you.

Listening Skills

Thanks to email, instant messages, chat rooms, social media, and other tools brought to life courtesy of technology, we all have a whole lot more to learn these days if we are to communicate effectively with others.

It used to be that people only needed to sharpen their communication skills for phone conversations and face-to-face appearances. For many, these scenarios were bad enough. Nowadays, even in small groups and one-to-one settings, effective communication is getting tougher.

Fortunately, there are some very simple tips that anyone can use to help them on the road to clear, effective communication. Whether addressing a large crowd, talking on the phone, or working one-on-one, mastering these three essential skills will put you well on your way to becoming a much better communicator:

- **Listen:** Communication is a two-way street. Half the battle is learning how to really hear, process and respond to what others are saying. A good listener takes a keen interest in his audience, uses appropriate verbal and non-verbal door-openers, and asks questions to encourage conversation.
- **Repeat:** When you paraphrase something in a different way to how it was delivered to you, you're clarifying your understanding and stimulating further discussion.
- **Reflect:** Too many people open their mouths and speak without thinking. Before you let the words escape, think carefully. Slow down to make sure you have given appropriate consideration to what you are about to say

5. Written Communication

In today's world of rapid-fast communication via texts and emails, most of us would rather shoot off a written message than make a phone call. It's fast, efficient, and it provides a nice document trail for our work records. And of course, like all other communication skills, good writing skills can be learned.

Writing Process

Successful written communication requires careful thought and planning. It should contain comprehensive information about a specific subject and yet be clear, correct and easy to read.

A well-written piece of work requires you to pay attention to the following three stages in the writing process: planning, writing, and editing.

Planning: To write a good report, you need to plan what you want to say. After you have decided on what you want to say, list down all the points and arrange them in a logical and suitable sequence. This approach will ensure the clarity of your message and help you to avoid omitting relevant details.

Writing: The writing stage requires careful execution. It includes a pre-writing stage where you gather all the information necessary to ensure that there is substance to your writing. Start writing in simple and plain English and move from something concrete to something more abstract and expressive.

In order to improve your writing skills, you need to practice writing in the target language every day until you are able to express yourself clearly and meet the needs of your reader. Once you start writing, the words, sentences, paragraphs, and lay-outs become writing tools which you can use to convey your message concisely, courteously, and confidently.

Adopt a plain, straightforward style when writing. This makes your work easy to understand and reduces the chances of misunderstanding arising from ambiguity.

Editing: The third stage in the writing process is editing. It is crucial to check for grammatical errors and ensure that there is smooth language flow. The longer the report, the more editing is usually required. It can be useful to get someone else to read through the written piece for you.

Sebranek, Meyer and Kemper (1996) summed it up in a nutshell when they say that writing is like "…basketball and juggling, it is not a God-given mysterious talent given only to a chosen few but, rather, a skill that gets better with practice, practice that involves increased challenges and, therefore, risk."

Pitfalls to Avoid

Basically, there are four types of main errors that you should avoid in written communication:

Confusing Language: Confusing language refers to words that mislead the reader and cause a communication breakdown. It may also result in barriers being erected between the writer and the reader. Avoid words which are ambiguous, bombastic, vague, sexist, exaggerated, inflated and archaic. Remember to write in plain, good English.

Verbosity: Verbosity means the use of too many words, so much so that they interfere with understanding. If verbosity persists, it may antagonize, confuse, and bore the reader.

Check out this example:

- The stability and quality of our financial performance will be developed through the profitable execution of our existing business, as well as the acquisition or development of new businesses. (Too long, too wordy, passive voice.)
- We will improve our financial performance not only by executing our existing business more profitably but by acquiring or developing new businesses. (Better, shorter, active voice.)

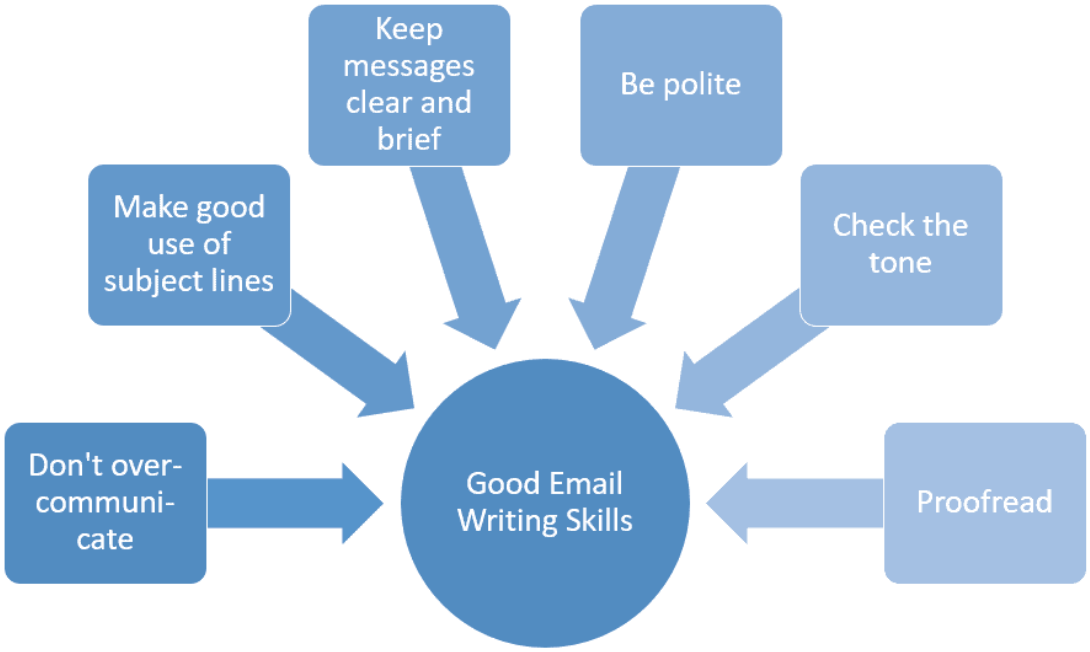
Poor Sentence Structure: Poor sentence structure often leads to fragmented writing and choppy sentences that impede understanding. Try to keep your sentence(s) short and concise to ensure that they are correct, logical and easy to understand. Word order is important for meaning. Remember that words should be structured in such a way that those which precede should be in accordance with those that follow.

Information Overload: Information overload means giving so much information until you feel overwhelmed and confused. This may cause frustration and cast doubts on the writer's credibility. Therefore, as a writer, you must decide on the type of information required and present this to produce a clear, concise and relevant piece of written work.

Email Writing Skills

An email is a core tool for business communications, but a survey by Sendmail Inc. found that communication by email has caused tension, confusion, or other negative consequences for 64 percent of working professionals.

So, how can you avoid your emails doing this? And how can you write emails that get the results you want? Here are six strategies you can use to ensure that your use of email is clear, effective and successful:



Don't over-communicate by email:
One of the biggest sources of stress at work is the sheer volume of emails that people receive. So, before you begin writing an email, ask yourself: "Is this really necessary?" As part of this, you should use the phone or IM to deal with questions that are likely to need some back-and-forth discussion.

Make good use of subject lines:
A newspaper headline has two functions: it grabs your attention, and it summarizes the article so that you can decide whether to read it or not. The subject line of your email message should do the same thing. A well-written subject line like the one below delivers the most important information, without the recipient even having to open the email.

- Bad example subject line: Meeting
- Good example subject line: PASS Process Meeting – 10 a.m. February 25

Keep messages clear and brief:
Emails, like traditional business letters, need to be clear and concise. Keep your sentences short and to the point. The body of the email should be direct and informative, and it should contain all pertinent information.

Be polite:
People often think that emails can be less formal than traditional letters.

But the messages you send are a reflection of your own professionalism, values, and attention to detail, so a certain level of formality is needed. Unless you're on good terms with someone, avoid informal language, slang, jargon, and inappropriate abbreviations. Recipients may decide to print emails and share them with others, so always be polite.

Check the tone:
When we meet people face-to-face, we use the other person's body language, vocal tone, and facial expressions to assess how they feel. Email robs us of this information, and this means that we can't tell when people have misunderstood our messages. Your choice of words, sentence length, punctuation, and capitalization can easily be misinterpreted without visual and auditory cues.

Proofread:
Finally, before you hit "send," take a moment to review your email for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes. Your email messages are as much a part of your professional image as the clothes you wear, so it looks bad to send out a message that contains typos.

Make your emails concise and to the point. Only send them to the people who really need to see them, and be clear about what you would like the recipient to do next. Remember that your emails are a reflection of your professionalism, values, and attention to detail. Try to imagine how others might interpret the tone of your message.

6. Verbal Communication

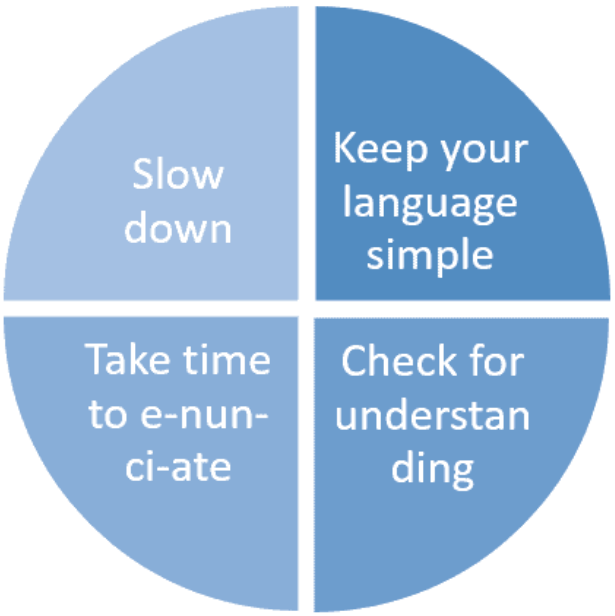
There are a large number of different verbal communication skills. They range from being able to speak clearly to presenting in front of a crowd to discussing effectively on the phone. This chapter provides a summary of these skills and shows you how to improve yours.

Clarity

If you work in a multi-cultural environment, you've probably had experiences where you've wondered, "Did he say 'thought' or 'taught'? Was that word, 'pirate' or 'pilot'? Did she really say 'sheet' or was it something else?"

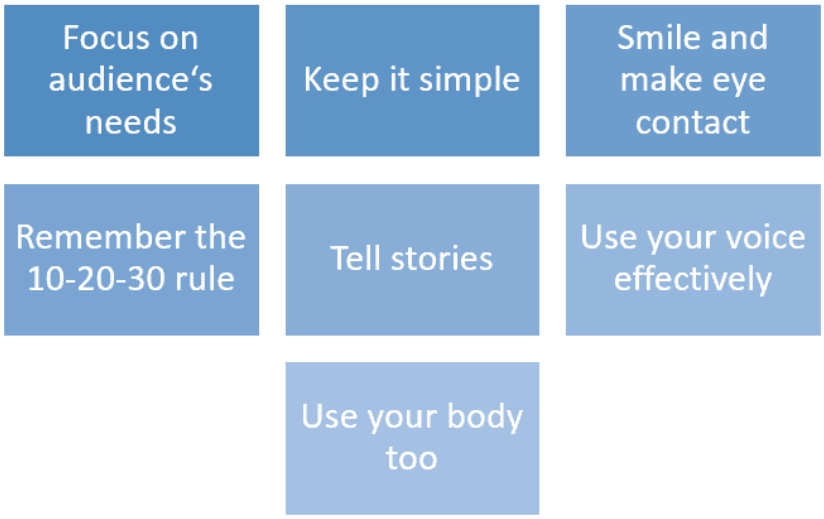
The way you pronounce your words and the tone of voice you use will have an impact on the effectiveness of any message. Just as using the right words is essential, it's also important to consider your voice and your tone if you are to be understood and get your message across effectively.

Here are four simple steps to help you increase your vocal clarity:



- **Slow down:** So many people speak too quickly and almost in a monotone. Please slow down. It will give you more confidence, not less.
- **Keep your language simple:** Don't use big words, thinking you'll impress people. You won't. Simple is better.
- **Take time to e-nun-ci-ate:** Really articulate every word. It may feel rather unnatural to you at first but stick with it. Your comfort level will rise, and your clarity will improve. This also means your listener's comfort level will increase.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask your listeners if they have understood your pronunciation, since they may hesitate to tell you.

How can you make a good presentation even more effective? Whether you are an experienced presenter, or just starting out, these seven tips should help you to improve:



Focus on your audience's needs:
Your presentation needs to be built around what your audience is going to get out of the presentation. As you prepare the presentation, you always need to bear in mind what the audience needs and wants to know, not what you can tell them.

Keep it simple: concentrate on your core message:
When planning your presentation, you should always keep in mind the question: What is the key message (or three key points) for my audience to take away? You should be able to communicate that key message very briefly. Some experts recommend a 30-second 'elevator summary', others that you can write it on the back of a business card, or say it in no more than 15 words.

Smile and make eye contact with your audience:
This sounds very easy, but a surprisingly large number of presenters fail to do it. If you smile and make eye contact, you are building rapport, which helps the audience to connect with you and your subject. It also helps you to feel less nervous because you are talking to individuals, not to a great mass of unknown people.

Remember the 10-20-30 rule for slideshows:
This is a tip from Guy Kawasaki of Apple. He suggests that slideshows should:

- Contain no more than 10 slides;
- Last no more than 20 minutes; and
- Use a font size of no less than 30 points.

This last is particularly important as it stops you trying to put too much information on one single slide. This whole approach avoids the dreaded 'Death by PowerPoint'.

Tell stories:
Human beings are programmed to respond to stories. Stories help us to pay attention, and also to remember things. If you can use stories in your presentation, your audience is more likely to engage and to remember your points afterward. It is a good idea to start with a story, but there is a wider point too: you need your presentation to act like a story. Think about what story you are trying to tell your audience, and create your presentation to tell it.

Use your voice effectively:
The spoken word is actually a pretty inefficient means of communication because it uses only one of your audience's five senses. That's why presenters tend to use visual aids, too. But you can help to make the spoken word better by using your voice effectively. Varying the speed at which you talk, and emphasizing changes in pitch and tone all help to make your voice more interesting and hold your audience's attention.

Use your body too:
It has been estimated that more than three-quarters of communication is non-verbal. That means that as well as your tone of voice, your body language is crucial to getting your message across. Make sure that you are giving the right messages: body language to avoid includes crossed arms, hands held behind your back or in your pockets, and pacing the stage. Make your gestures open and confident, and move naturally around the stage, and among the audience too, if possible.

If you can bring yourself to relax, you will almost certainly present better. If you can actually start to enjoy yourself, your audience will respond to that and engage better. Your presentations will improve exponentially, and so will your confidence. It's well worth a try.

Telephone Communication Skills

When we speak on the telephone, we cannot use hand gestures or facial expressions to get our meaning across. We only have our voice. Have you ever considered how your voice sounds to others?

Have you told someone, “Hey, you should be on the radio!”? There’s often a special voice type that works well on the radio, isn’t there? They tend to speak with positive energy, with warmth, and with clarity. They know that if they don’t, you might switch to another station.

To a certain extent, the same goes for you in your business. You will benefit from being very clear and pleasant to listen to over the phone. People will pick up the phone more willingly, and stay on the phone longer when they like how you speak to them.

Here are some key things to focus on when improving your telephone voice:

Phone manners:

- Pitch and tone
- Inflection
- Energy
- Attention
- Rate
- Enunciation
- Smiling

- **Pitch and tone:** It’s very uncomfortable to listen to someone who speaks in a very high pitch. Speaking in a lower pitch can be more comfortable, and can give you more authority. Speak in a friendly, informal tone, to help build the relationship.
- **Rate:** Slow down your normal rate of speaking on the telephone to give your listener a chance to take in what you say. Remember that people need time to think on the telephone too, so don’t feel obliged to fill every gap.
- **Inflection:** Use correct emphasis to make your meaning clear, with a rise and fall in your voice.
- **Enunciation:** Don’t mumble or slur your words. Make an effort to pronounce each word carefully.
- **Energy:** A lot of your energy is lost over the telephone lines. This means you need to express more energy on the phone than when you are face to face.
- **Smiling:** Say this sentence without smiling, “This is Martha from Sales. How can I help you?” Now say it again with a real smile on your face. I’m sure you had more energy and even more

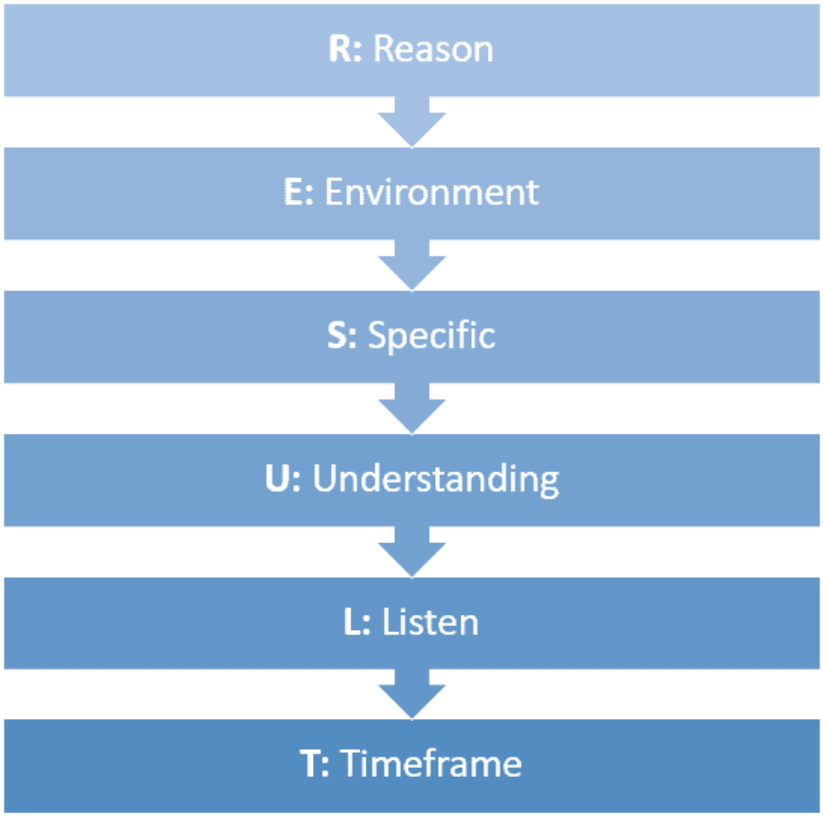
intonation in your voice that second time around. Even if people can't see you smiling, they can hear it.

- **Attention:** Give them your full attention. Make a commitment to the caller. Don't talk and type. Don't talk and eat.

7. Tool: RESULT Principle

The RESULT principle is a great summary of everything you have learned in this course and an easy-to-use tool to use in real business situations. It is a systematic approach that can help you to improve your communication skills and become an effective communicator regardless of the situation you are in.

The six components of the RESULT principle are:



Reason: All communication must be for a reason and the most effective dialogues will have a sole purpose or objective that the instigator wants to achieve as a result of the communication. The more thought you put into why you want to open up this process the more objective and focused your purpose will be. The most productive communications have a single objective ensuring clarity and ease of comprehension. Any conversation, discussion, or meeting can have many exchanges but focusing on a single objective will ensure your success.

Environment: In your management role you will find yourself needing to communicate in a wide variety of situations – for example, with your team, colleagues, management, stakeholders, suppliers, etc. For your communications to be effective it is essential that you define the nature of each situation and adapt your message to the environment. This preparation enables you to adopt the best style of communication to suit your approach and prepare for potential arguments or problems.

Specific: You must now specify exactly what it is you want or need from the other persons. You must make sure that you have any supporting information, background, or data that guarantees that your message and exchange will have clarity. In some contexts, you will need to break down your supporting information into manageable chunks. For example, executives want to hear the financial and business aspects of a project while members of a project want to hear how it is progressing.

Understanding: Whatever form of communication you need to conduct, an essential part of the process is ensuring that the recipient actually correctly understands the message you want to give them. You can't afford to make any assumptions: you need to get confirmation from the recipient that they have the same understanding as you about what a situation may be and what the required action plan is.

Listen: You will only gain this level of 'true' understanding if you actively listen to what is being said and observe the behaviors of those involved in the communication. Active listening is a communication technique, which requires the listener to feedback what they hear to the speaker, by way of re-stating or paraphrasing what they have heard in their own words, to confirm the understanding of both parties.

Timeframe: The final aspect of the RESULT principle is concerned with the amount of time you have to prepare for and conduct the actual communication. Not all exchanges occur in situations where you have all the time you want. However much time you have, make sure that you

use it effectively by following these principles. The better prepared you are the more effective and productive your communications will be.

8. Conclusion

As you learned in this course, good communication skills are essential to your management career. Communication is a **two-way process** and it is only successful when all of the parties involved have the same understanding of what has been communicated.

When you communicate well…

- you are able to build rapport with others,
- you come across as organized and efficient,
- you avoid misunderstandings,
- you can give clear instructions or explanations, and
- other people trust and respect you.

Each person's **communication style** is a unique combination of their own innate skills and those learned both formally and through experience. What makes some people better than others at communicating is their ability to adapt their style to suit the message and the environment. Most people have a preferred communication style that describes how they behave in most of their communications. There are four basic styles and each one is useful in its place. However, a skilled communicator uses each of these four approaches depending on which one is the most appropriate at the time.

People also have preferences when it comes to **receiving information** and it is important to understand these when delegating work or giving instructions because using a supplementary form of communication can ensure that your message is correctly interpreted.

Effective communication depends on your ability to read the attitude of the other person or group you are communicating with. You can do this by observing their **body language** and using **active listening** to make

sure that you really do understand their attitude and reaction to your message.

The **RESULT principle** can help you to improve your communication skills. This acronym stands for Reason, Environment, Specific, Understanding, Listen, and Timeframe. As well as having an understanding of the RESULT principle, there are certain barriers to communication that you need to be able to identify and overcome. The key to success is to ensure that communication is a **two-way interactive process** and that both parties understand each other **clearly**.