

**Cebu Technological University-Main Campus**

**Problem Solving 101**

**Chapter 3 - Fishy Goals and Solid Achievements**

**Break Down a Big Dream into Smaller Goals**

Problem-solving kids don't just have big dreams; they go after their larger goals by breaking them down into smaller milestones and asking themselves, "What should I do this year, or in the next three months, or today?"

There's a proven problem-solving kids' process for figuring out how to achieve such a goal.

Step 1: Set a clear goal. When setting our goal, we need to be specific in how we achieve it including a timeline. For example, instead of setting: "I need to buy a computer", it's better to make it: "I want to buy a \$500 used Apple computer within six months without borrowing money from others. "

Step 2: Determine the gap between the goal and the current situation. Once you set a clear goal, you need to identify the gap between your goal and your current situation. If the gap is small, the solution may be very obvious. But if the gap is large, you may have to really think through how to achieve the goal.

Step 3: Form a hypothesis about how to close the gap and achieve the goal. We can use the logic tree introduced in Class#1 so we can come up with a variety of more specific ideas.

3A List as many options and ideas as possible. For example, we can deduce a solution to increase our income and reduce spending. Then we can break it down more specifically. In Reducing spending, we can break it down more into categories like Entertainment, Food and beverages, and others. To make the tree grow vertically, repeatedly ask yourself, "Are there other ways of solving the problem?" You can grow the tree horizontally by asking, "Specifically how or what falls into this category?" In this manner, you'll end up developing a wide variety of specific ideas.

3B Select the best ideas as the hypothesis. Among the choices that we have, we can size it down by branching out our logic tree if the idea is effective or feasible or if it goes against your values. The hypothesis pyramid is a great tool for structuring your argument.

Step 4: Check the hypothesis. Go back to step 3 if the hypothesis is disproved.

4A Determine the analyses and information required to test the hypothesis. Once we come up with a hypothesis for how we will achieve our goal, our next step is to figure out what analyses and information will be required to test our hypothesis.

4B Analyze and develop an action plan.

### **The Most Critical Step: Execution**

To achieve the most impact, we need to have an effective plan and great execution. If we have one but not the other, we won't be able to reach our goal. We need both. Once you have a concrete plan of action to achieve your goal, don't forget to create a concrete schedule. Remember to monitor your progress and revise your plan as necessary.