

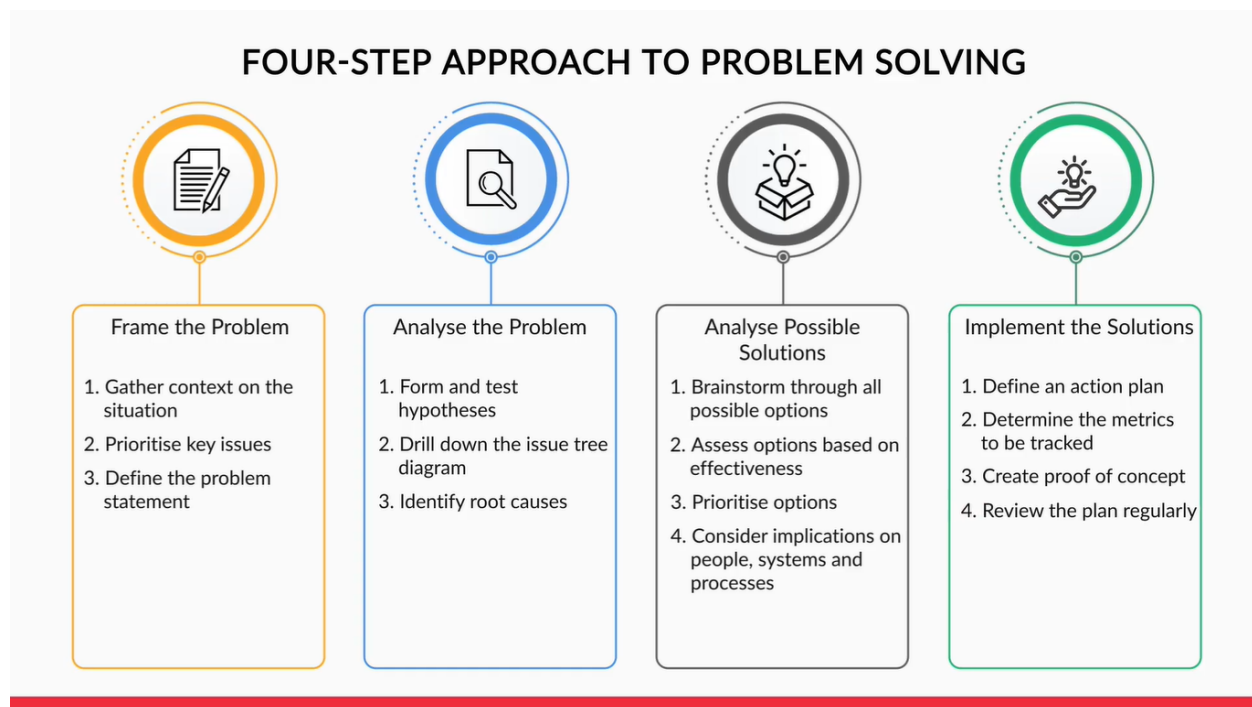
Summary Document
Module 1: Problem Solving Skills
Session 3: Framing the Problem

In this session, you learnt about the multiple approaches that can be used to solve a problem. You also understood the importance of building the right approach for solving complex problems.

Segment 1: Session Overview

In this segment, you learnt about the four-step problem-solving approach that can assist you in arriving at structured solutions. The steps are as follows:

1. Frame the problem.
2. Analyse the problem.
3. Analyse the possible solutions.
4. Implement the solutions.



Segment 2: Step 1- Framing the Problem with Precision

Next, you learnt that to obtain a desired outcome, it is necessary to frame the problem accurately. Some crucial activities that must be carried out to frame the problem statement are as follows:

- Establishing the need for a solution
- Justifying the need for this solution
- Contextualising the problem to understand it completely before working on the solution

With the help of an example, you understood how these activities helped the restaurant staff to recognise the reason for the decline in their sales.

Segment 3: Prioritising Key Issues

In this segment, you understood the importance of prioritising the key issues out of all the issues that have been identified. The different criteria that can be used to prioritise the key issues are as follows:

- Probability of occurrence
- Frequency of the problem
- Damage that the problem can cause
- Impact of the problem on various stakeholders
- Cost, effort, resources and time required to address the problem
- Feasibility of the problem
- Benefits of solving the problem

After you have narrowed down your prioritisation criteria, it is important to get an opinion from all the stakeholders.

Segment 4: Framing the Problem Using the S.M.A.R.T Framework

In this segment, you learnt that once the key issue is identified and prioritised, it is crucial to clearly define the problem statement. The S.M.A.R.T framework can be used to frame the problem statement effectively. The S.M.A.R.T framework stands for Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Timed:

‘S’ - Specific - This includes:

- Specifically defining the problem statement,
- Avoiding general statements, and
- Narrowing down the problem to a specific problem statement.

‘M’ - Measurable - This entails the following:

- Quantifying the problem statement
- Defining the metrics associated with the implementation of the solution to help in tracking the progress

‘A’ - Actionable - This refers to explicitly defining the nature of the actions undertaken to solve the problem.

'R' - Relevant - This means excluding things/tasks that are not relevant to the problem or lack materiality.

'T' - Timed - This includes the following:

- The problem statements should have clearly stated deadlines
- Defining a timeline for obtaining a solution

Finally, with the help of the detailed example, you learnt how Raj implemented the S.M.A.R.T framework to form a problem statement that was specific, measurable and relevant along with a clear action plan and time frame to achieve the desired outcome.

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