

Use the five whys for root cause analysis

Recently, you've been learning why business solutions almost always require some data detective work. This is one way critical thinking helps data professionals determine the right questions to ask in order to arrive at those solutions. One very common question is, "What is the root cause of the problem?" A **root cause** is the reason why a problem occurs. So, by identifying and eliminating the root cause, data professionals can help stop that problem from occurring again.

The **five whys** is a simple but effective technique for identifying a root cause. It involves asking "Why?" repeatedly until the answer reveals itself. This often happens at the fifth "why," but sometimes you'll need to continue asking more times, sometimes fewer.

