Five W Techniques for Problem Solving

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Subject: Leadership

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5 W's for Effective Problem Solving

A Leadership Perspective

- **What:** Define problem clearly.

  - *Example:* Onboarding satisfaction drop.

- **Why:** Investigate root causes.

  - *Example:* Complex setup, poor docs.

- **Who:** Identify Individuals/teams.

  - *Example:* Product, Support, Engineering.

- **When:** Establish timeline/urgency.

  - *Example:* Resolve in two sprints.

- **Where:** Pinpoint issue context.

  - *Example:* Initial product setup.

Introduction: The Leader's Daily Challenge

- Leaders face daily challenges:
  - Team dynamics
  - Process issues
  - Strategic hurdles
- Five W Technique helps:
  - Reduce ambiguity
  - Core problem understanding
- Enhances leadership:
  - Clear decisions
  - Teamwork
  - Leadership effectiveness

What? Identifying the Leadership Problem

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Define Precisely

State specific issue.

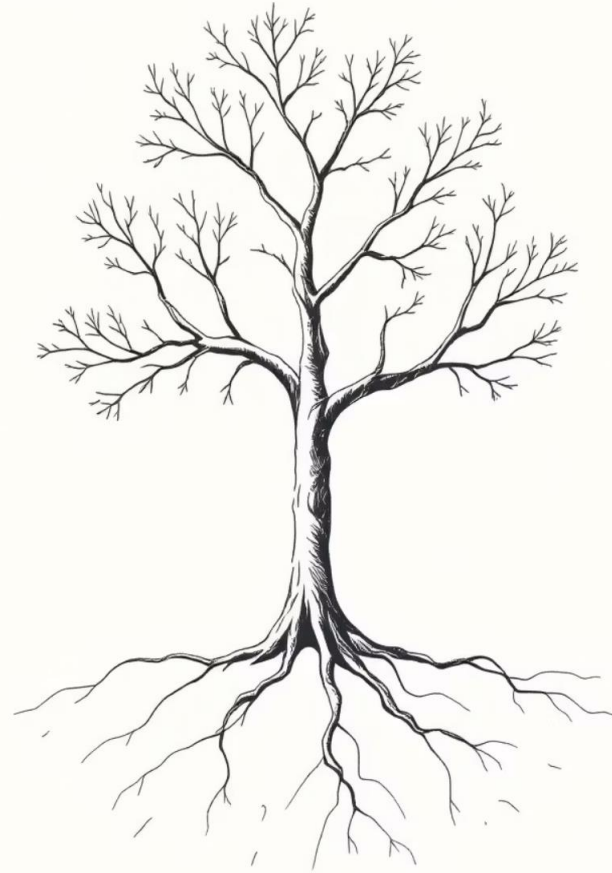◎✓

Prevent Confusion

Avoid misdirected efforts.

Examples:

- Task delays

- Team conflict

- Quality failures

Why? Finding the Root Cause

Analyse Reasons, Not Symptoms

- Question: Why leadership problem?

- Uncover deeper causes.

- Analysis reveals:

  - Communication gaps

  - Motivation issues

  - Poor resources

  - Flawed processes

- Seek lasting solutions.

Examples:

- Team morale down?
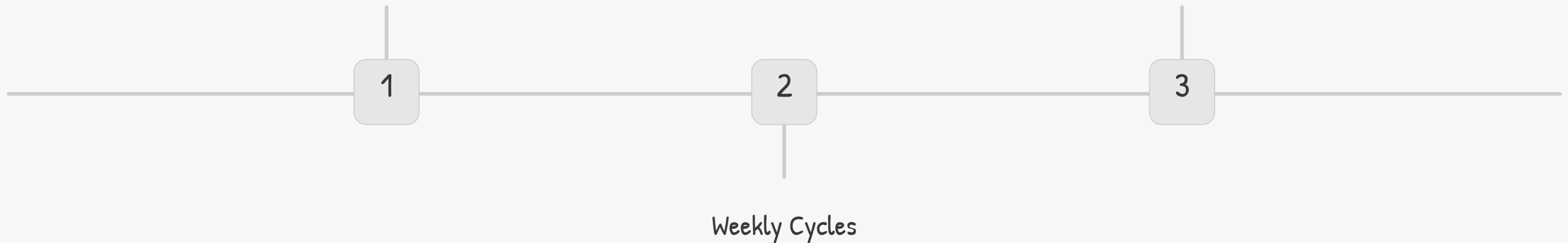
- Targets missed?

- Conflicts recurring?

When? Timing and Patterns for Leaders

Daily Patterns

- Specific times/shifts

- **Example:** Stand-ups overrun? Reschedule.

High-Pressure Situations

- Deadlines, peak seasons

- **Example:** Month-end quality issues? Pre-checks.

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Weekly Cycles

- Particular days/meetings

- **Example:** Monday complaints? Check weekend.

When do issues occur? Track timing to plan preventive action, improve efficiency.

Where? Locating the Problem

Organizational Location

Identify problem location for targeted action.

- Teams, departments, workflows, touchpoints?

Field Operations

- On-site team issues.

- **Example:** Service call delays.

Office Environment

- Headquarters/admin issues.

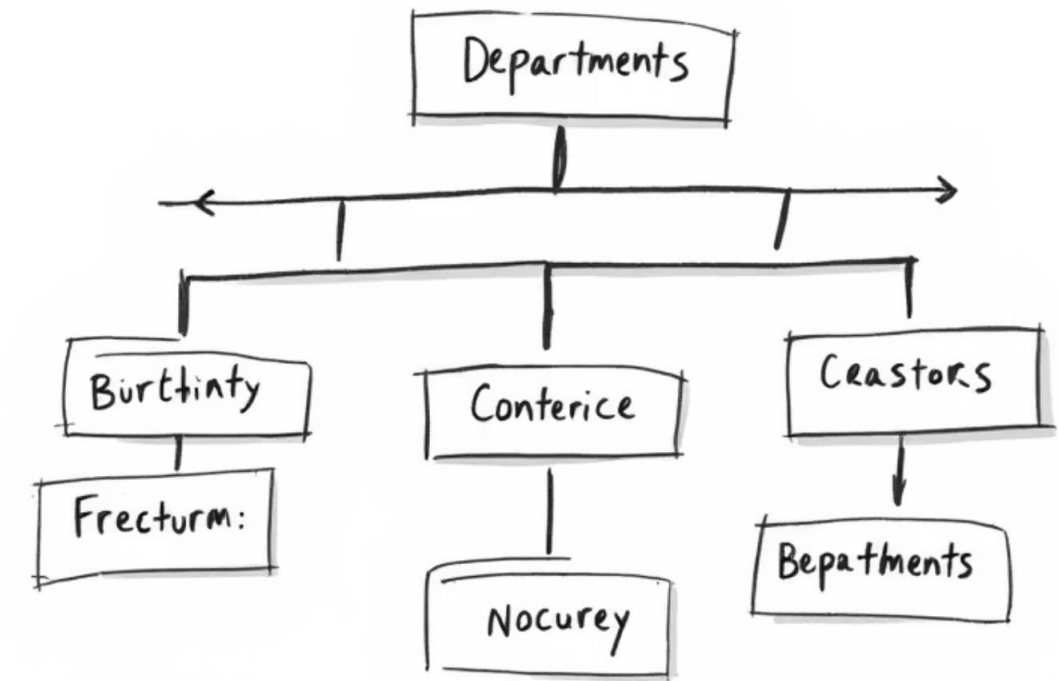- **Example:** Low morale.

Remote Work

- Distributed team problems.

- **Example:** Communication breakdowns.

Cross-Functional Areas

- Departmental handoff issues.

- **Example:** Poor R&D/Marketing coordination.

Netsin Chart

Who? People Involved

Identify Key Stakeholders

Identify individuals and groups involved or affected:

Development Needs

Individuals needing training/skills. (e.g., CRM training)

Support Requirements

Who needs resources/mentoring? (e.g., project guidance)

Performance Coaching

Who needs feedback/guidance? (e.g., deadline struggles)

Thank You