Why should I close incidents and open a problem?

Service availability and recovery is key to enable business users to perform their activities using our services.

For this reason SLAs are aligned and negotiated with the business including response and resolution times as defined by the ITIL best practise. We are requested to achieve these resolution times and these times are reported to the business through "Incident Performance Reporting".

This means:

Incidents need to be resolved whenever the business user is able to work againKeeping incidents open for long analysis or resolution negatively impacts our ability to fulfill the SLA targets

Difference between Incident and Problem Management

The following table briefly describes the difference between Incident Management and Problem Management

Incident ManagementProblem ManagementFocus on service recoveryFocus on underlying causeResolve incident quickly with acceptable workaroundTake required time to analyze and eliminate the underlying causeSubject to incident performance reporting with resolution timesNot considered in reporting about resolution timesDirect contact with business usersInternal process without direct contact with business users

Here are some real live examples of workarounds for incidents compared to solutions eliminating the underlying cause:

WorkaroundsSolutions to eliminate the underlying cause