

Course Introduction

Case Study Guidelines

Dr. Monica Thiel

Define the Problem

- 1 Explicitly state the problem. Are you sure it is a problem? Is it important?**
- 2 Where is the problem? Is it an individual, relationships, group, intergroup, leadership/motivation/power, total system?**
- 3 Why is it a problem? Is there a "gap" between the actual performance and desired performance? For whom is it a problem and why?**
- 4 Can the problem be solved permanently or will it occur again? Is this problem masking a deeper systematic problem?**

BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS

What can be changed?

- **new methods and standards?**
- **educating workers, customers or citizens?**
- **new hardware? equipment? software?**
- **new product or design?**
- **new incentives?**
- **bring in new people?**
- **improved public relations?**
- **increased opportunities for others to provide feedback?**

SELECT A SOLUTION

- 1 **Address the Problem** - Does the alternative address the critical aspect of the problem? What are your objectives?
- 2 **Improve the Situation** - How does this solution improve the situation? How much? How long - permanently or temporarily?
- 3 **Will it work?** - What is the probability of success? What are the risks? What happens if the plan fails?
- 4 **Does it fit?** Is the change consistent with the organizational culture? If not, will it still be viable?
- 5 **Remember the Consequences** - What are the intended and unintended consequences? How will your decision improve the situation?
- 6 **Think of Resources** - What does the plan depend on in terms of money, people, authority, equipment? What are the costs? What power and control is needed?

CASE REALITIES

- 1 You will often not have all the information you would like.**
- 2 There is rarely one "right" answer - more than one solution may be possible.**
- 3 One of most critical yet most difficult aspect of case analysis may be identifying the problem, BUT you may never be sure you have identified the real problem.**
- 4 Accept that cases and actual management situations often involve:**
 - a ambiguous situations**
 - b multiple causality**
 - c inadequate information**
 - d no one elegant solution**
- 5 Acknowledge that personal values play a role in many situations.**
- 6 Some problems may have "no solution", but it's important to do the analysis.**