Problem Definition Worksheet (Part of Your Process Improvement Project)

Background about the Process Improvement Project

**Project Selection Criteria**

Select an issue or opportunity that can be written as a problem statement.

* Must be within your sphere of influence
* Is not an attempt to solve world hunger
* Uses data that is accessible to you or can be collected in a reasonable amount of effort/time
* You have the ability to measure the current and future state; you have access to baseline data or can collect it
* Preferably uses more continuous data (rather than all discrete data)
* Fixing this problem will provide value; you should develop a business case to support working this issue (consider your time and others when calculating ROI)

**Examples**

* Improve product quality
* Reduce expenses
* Improve the output of your organization
* Decrease wait time

Problem Definition Worksheet

Complete each section:

**A. Problem statement.** Define your problem. What pains are you (or your customers, family, clients, etc.) experiencing? What is broken, wrong, or not working? How do you know that you have a problem? What is telling you this? What is your evidence?  
**B. Business impact.** Why should you fix this problem? What is the estimated benefit for solving this problem? What is this problem worth in dollars? How will you measure success? What is your key output (*y*)?   
**C. Goals.** What are your improvement objectives, goals, or targets? How much "better" do you want to be? Quantify this goal.  
**D. Project scope.** What are your boundaries? What is the first step and last step of the process you need to fix? What is not within your scope?  
**E. Team.** Who is the process owner/champion? Who do you need to work with or involve to analyze and/or impact this process?  
**F. Project plan (very high-level).** Estimate time (or date) per DMAIC step. Develop a rough timeline.  
**G. Process map.** What are the steps in the process you are trying to fix? Document the flow of process steps (of the process you are working to improve). This should be a high-level flow chart.

Assignment Formatting

Create your Problem Definition Worksheet in Microsoft Word.

Submission Instructions

Save your responses in a .doc file.