



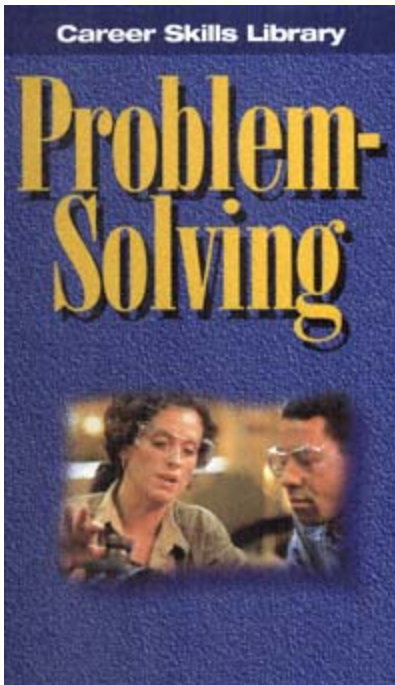
## Your file couldn't be accessed

It may have been moved, edited, or deleted.

ERR\_FILE\_NOT\_FOUND

[cover](#)

[next page >](#)



---

**title:**  
**author:**  
**publisher:**  
**isbn10 | asin:**  
**print isbn13:**  
**ebook isbn13:**  
**language:**  
**subject**  
**publication date:**  
**lcc:**  
**ddc:**  
**subject:**

[cover](#)

[next page >](#)

[< previous page](#)

page\_1

[next page >](#)

Page 1

# Problem-Solving

Career Skills Library

[< previous page](#)

page\_1

[next page >](#)

This book will help you take those innate problem-solving skills a step further. We'll go on an intriguing exploration into your brain to discover how you think. Then we'll look at a simple five-step process to help you solve problems and make decisions.

With a little effort, you can become an expert problem solver. No problem.

As soon as Brad and his solar panel company settled on their plan of action to conduct an island-wide positive image campaign over the next 12 months they got down to business. A step-by-step strategy targeted all local media. Their own materials and flyers were rewritten. Salespeople were called in for seminars on projecting confidence and the right image.

Over the next year, Brad developed ads by "the Sunshine Guys." They had their own jingle, their own success stories, their own emblem. Eventually, the whole island could sing that jingle and grew to trust the Sunshine Guys. The bold plan of action had set Brad's company apart from their competitors.

#### A PLAN OF ACTION INCLUDES . . .

A clear statement of the overall plan

Goals and clear-cut objectives

A step-by-step strategy

A schedule, with deadlines

Allocation of human and financial resources

Delegation of jobs

Contingency plans

An internal review system

## Scheduling

A timeline of action is an integral part of forming a plan of action. When will new brochures need to be issued? March 15? Then that means the rewritten copy must be completed by . . . which means the writer or publicity firm must be hired by. . . . Scheduling needs to be specific, realistic, encompassing every part of the action plan.

Each objective should have its own deadline or deadlines. And those deadlines have to be coordinated with all other objectives. In Brad's Hawaiian campaign, they decided on a blitz, with print, radio, and television media starting the same day.

If a number of individuals have to be contacted, is the order important? If so, schedule accordingly.

If you fail to meet your deadline, you could single-handedly derail your company's action plan.

One of the worst crimes a team member can commit against his team is to miss a deadline. Don't do it. Your geography teacher may have been understanding of missed deadlines. She granted you an extension. But your team can't afford this luxury. If you fail to meet your deadline, you could single-handedly derail your company's action plan.

## Delegating

Once all the individual parts of the plan of action have been detailed, goals and objectives in place, a time-



Individuals working as a team can achieve their goals more efficiently when each one is assigned the tasks for which they are best suited.

(V. Harlow/Russell Library)

line established, it's time to settle who does what. A good manager or team leader will delegate wisely. Work should be as evenly distributed as possible. And team members should be working in areas of their strengths.

*I not only use all the brains I have, but all I can borrow.*

President Woodrow Wilson

As the rookie on the problem-solving team, you may not get the jobs you want. The team may put

you in charge of copying materials, when all you want is a crack at television ads. Realize that you're going to have to earn those glitzier jobs. Give all you've got to whatever assignments you are given. Then you may do better next time.

Volunteer for tasks you know you can do well.

If you get to volunteer for tasks, don't just ask for the more glamorous or the easier jobs. Everybody will know why your hand went up, and they won't appreciate it. Instead, volunteer for tasks you know you can do well. Communicate. Ask what's involved, and be honest about your strengths and weaknesses. Ask for the legwork jobs nobody wants. Do more than you have to do just to hold up your end.

Don't consider your job done when you've accomplished everything you've been delegated. You're not done until the whole plan is accomplished. So, if you find yourself with free time on your hands, ask your teammates what you can do to help them with their responsibilities.

### Putting It All Together

A sound action plan includes other essentials, too. How much money will you need to see the plan through? Where will you get the funds? Will you need more personnel? More space? More direction?

*The way to achieve success is first to have a definite, clear, practical ideaa goal, an objective. Second, have the necessary means to achieve your endswisdom, money, materials, methods. Third, adjust all your means to that end.*

Aristotle

Every great Plan A has a good Plan B waiting in the wings just in case. Chapter 9 deals with contingency plans and troubleshooting.

## EXERCISE

Draw up your own plan of action for successfully completing the best double date ever.

1. Brainstorm your possibilities. (Who and where.)
2. Evaluate your choices. (She's cool, but would hang up on me. He's great, but he's too old for me. Wrestling would be nice, but too expensive.)
3. Modify and select a plan. (State it clearly in writing.)
4. List the steps you'll need to pull off your plan. (Invitations, transportation, etc.)
5. Schedule the above steps. (Give yourself a deadline for making that phone call.)
6. Delegate. (If you're still double-dating, divide the work.)
7. Put it together. (Go ahead and do it.)

[< previous page](#)

page\_104

[next page >](#)