

HANDLE ATTITUDES FROM CUSTOMERS – Problem Solving

1) NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

THE 5 WHYS - The purpose of the 5 WHYS method is to find out the real reason for a particular problem and make sure you have identified it clearly. It encourages you to look at the problem fully. This can be an easy way to solve problems that arise in handling customers and in customer service in general.

2) OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOL

The main **objectives** are:

- Find a real reason for the problem
- How to see a problem from many different angles
- A systematic method to find out the real reason WHY

3) CONNECTION OF THE TOOL WITH THE ENEMY

The 5 WHYS method allows for discussion on what is causing the problem and allows people to see it from all angles, which ideally leads to the real cause for the problem.

The 5 WHYS technique is a simple and effective tool for solving problems when it comes to dealing with customers or as an internal evaluation tool for the customer service department. Its primary goal is to find the exact reason that causes a given problem by asking a sequence of “Why” questions.

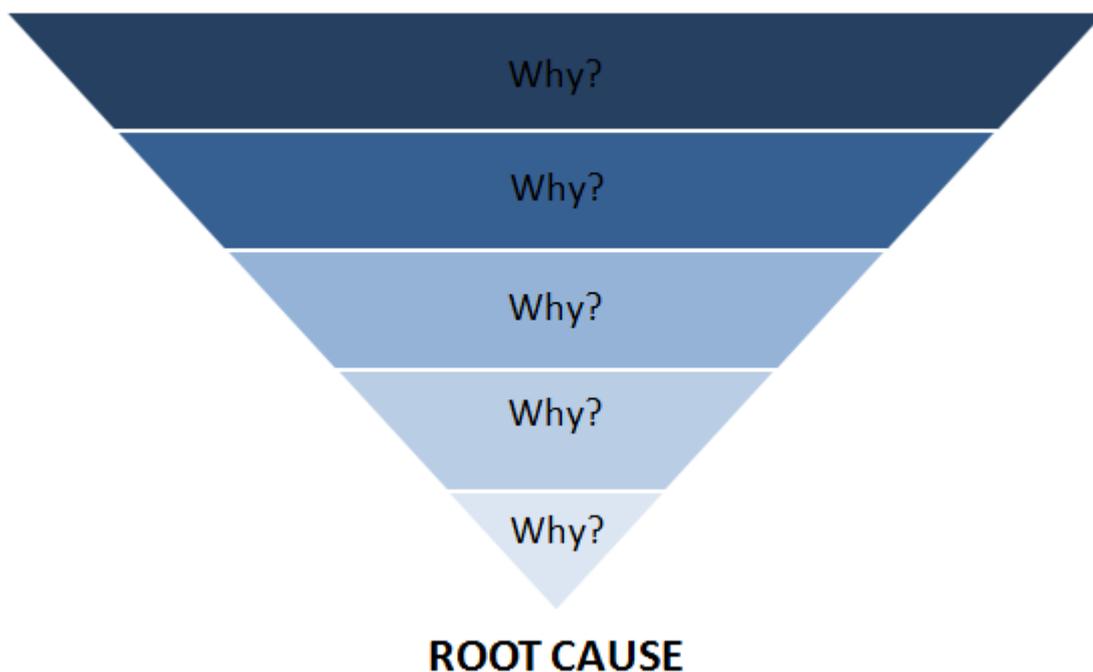
The 5 WHYS method helps your team focus on finding the root cause of any problem.



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4) RESOURCES & MATERIALS

PROBLEM: _____



The 5 WHYS is a technique to simply identify the cause of the problem, by asking a sequence of “Why” questions. Then the participants together create a graphic interpretation of this discussion.

Tools needed to create graphical image of problem

Resources needed to conduct the 5 WHYS discussion:

- a rectangular board to which a large sheet of paper can be pinned using pins
- 5 different coloured cards or post it notes

(Further reference from www.mindtools.com)



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5) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOOL

How to carry out the exercise

You start with the “PROBLEM” and ask the question “WHY” and come up with a “REASON/S” as to why there is a problem.

You then look at the “REASON/S” and ask the question “WHY” again. You keep asking the question “WHY” to each “REASON” and continue until to come to the same “REASON/S” twice in row.

Although this exercise seems quite straight forward, it could take quite a few “WHYS” until you get the same “REASON/S” twice in row or you could finish by the 3rd “WHY”. Most problems are solved by 5th or 6th “WHY”.

Time allocation: 5 min per step (WHY).

THE “PROBLEM”

At the top of the sheet, write down the “PROBLEM”. It should be formulated in a clear way, as a questioning phrase - as a problem to be solved.

1st “WHY” & “REASON 1”

Participants ask the question “Why” there was problem and write it down on one coloured card or post it note.

There might be more than one reason why.

Label these reasons “Reason 1” and put on the sheet under the “PROBLEM”

2nd “WHY” & “REASON 2”

Participants ask the 2nd question “Why” to “Reason/s 1”.

Again there might be more than one reason. Write these down on another coloured card or post it note.

Label these reasons “Reason 2” and put them on sheet under the “Reason 1”

3rd “WHY” & “REASON 3”

Participants ask the 3rd question “Why” to “Reason/s 2”.

Again there might be more than one reason. Write these down on another coloured card or post it note.

Label these reasons “Reason 3” and put them on sheet under the “Reason 2”.

At this stage you might be able to group together some reasons.

4th “WHY” & “REASON 4”



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Participants ask the 4th question “Why” to “Reason/s 3”. Again there might be more than one reason. Write these down on another coloured card or post it note.

Label these reasons “Reason 4” and put them on sheet under the “Reason 3”.

At this stage you might be able to group together some reasons.

5th “WHY” & “REASON 5”

Participants ask the 5th question “Why” to “Reason/s 4”.

Again there might be more than one reason. Write these down on another coloured card or post it note.

Label these reasons “Reason 5” and put them on sheet under the “Reason 4”.

At this stage you might be able to group together some reasons.

CONTINUE ASKING “WHY” until you get the same “REASON/S” twice in row

This should now give you some of the real “REASONS” for the problem. If you have not seen some repeating on the “REASONS” you might need to keep asking “WHY”.

Tips & Comments

The problem might be linear with one “REASON” for each “WHY” but it might expand out before coming back into a few “REASON/S”.

6) WHAT TO LEARN

The method has many **advantages** for dealing with customers:

- gives a broad view of the problem
- teaches cooperation
- gives the opportunity for all to speak
- teaches the ability to analyse and organise information
- systematic approach to finding of the cause of a problem
- gives the opportunity to compare views of from different people
- complements the participants' knowledge on a given topic
- increases work efficiency
- allows the customer service team to see the problem clearly

