



PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

Problem Solving and Decision Making involves identifying and understanding issues, exploring creative solutions, and choosing the best course of action. It requires taking a person-centered approach to find and evaluate solutions, act on them, and assess the results.



GROWTH LEVELS



Emerging

Uses a person-centered approach to identify, analyze, and solve problems by breaking them into steps, exploring options, choosing a solution, and evaluating the results.

Evolving

Keeps an open mind, uses new and past information to explore different solutions, works with others, and stays persistent to solve problems effectively.

Leading

Uses evidence-based practices and creative thinking to assess complex problems, weigh risks and benefits, support others in solving issues, and choose the best solution with people and outcomes in mind.

Influencing

Leads solutions to complex, multi-system challenges by identifying patterns, involving others in co-design, rethinking existing approaches, and considering the impact on all stakeholders.



Complete your self assessment on Advocacy and email it to yourself and then share with your mentor or someone you trust. [Click here to do a self assessment](#)

TEAM ACTIVITY

Island Survival

Your team has crash-landed on a deserted island. You have salvaged a list of 12 items. Your task is to rank them in order of importance for survival. You have 10 minutes to decide as a team.

1. Divide the team into groups of no more than 5
2. Give each team the list of items, have them work together to rank them in order of importance (10 minutes) must come to consensus
3. Have each team share their top three picks and why and their bottom three choices and why
4. Debrief: What strategy did your team use to prioritize items?

Was there any disagreement? How did you resolve it?
How did your team handle decision-making under time pressure? (The list of items is attached on final page)



ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST WITH COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Visually map out a problem. Identify a problem and break the problem into smaller parts and indicate possible solutions for the smaller problems.

- Select a problem and identify 2 possible solutions, create a pro and con list for each solution

Play charades or Pictionary and note how you demonstrated creativity
Practice your creative problem solving: pick a common item and identify 20 different uses for it (e.g. a fork, drinking glass etc.)

Choose a complex problem and brainstorm at least 10 solutions.

Conduct a scenario planning session with your team. Lead the team through a discussion of what could happen and what the possible responses could be

Ask your team to identify one policy/ practice that is not working well. Together explore the problem and brainstorm next steps towards addressing the challenge.

Learn more about the modernized core competencies:

VISIT: <https://dscorecomp.com>





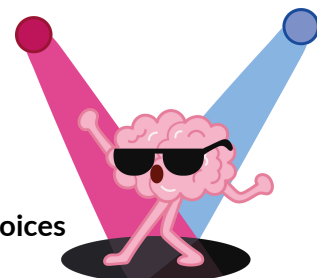
PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

Being **solution-oriented** means focusing on finding solutions rather than dwelling on problems. It involves adopting a positive and proactive approach to challenges, viewing them as opportunities for growth and improvement.

Key Characteristics of Solution-Oriented Individuals:

- A strong sense of curiosity, always seeking to understand the root causes of problems.
- They approach challenges with a positive attitude and are not deterred by setbacks.
- They are resourceful, actively seeking out information, tools, and support to overcome obstacles.

Being **solution-oriented** is a powerful mindset that empowers you to navigate obstacles, overcome challenges, and create positive change in your life. By focusing on solutions, cultivating a growth mindset, and embracing resilience, you can unlock your problem-solving potential and achieve success in all areas of your life. Embrace the power of being solution-oriented and watch as you transform obstacles into stepping stones toward your desired future.



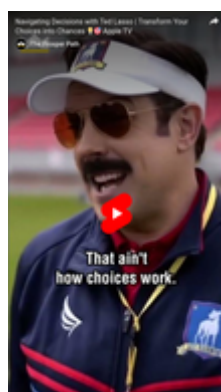
All decisions are choices

Cultivating a Solution-Oriented Mindset:

Practical strategies for developing and nurturing a solution-oriented mindset. Practice reframing problems as opportunities, seeking alternative perspectives, and focusing on what you can control. Foster a growth mindset that embraces learning from failures and setbacks, using them as stepping stones toward success.

Applying Solution-Oriented Thinking in Daily Life:

Apply solution-oriented thinking in various aspects of your life. Whether it's in your professional endeavors, personal relationships, or pursuing your passions, a solution-oriented approach can transform how you navigate challenges and achieve your goals. Embrace collaboration, seek feedback, and celebrate small wins along the way.



If you see it, share it!

Recognize your teammates

when you see them do a core competency. Watch for cards on your home/program bulletin board for details.



 Activity Name: "Island Survival"

Objective: Collaboratively prioritize items for survival after a fictional emergency scenario.

Duration: 15–20 minutes

Team Size: 3–6 people per group (or the whole team if small)

 Scenario:

Your team has crash-landed on a deserted island. You have salvaged a list of 12 items. Your task is to rank them in order of importance for survival. You have 10 minutes to decide as a team.

 Items List (in alphabetical order):

Axe
Blanket
Compass
First aid kit
Fishing net
Flashlight with batteries
Mirror
Plastic tarp
Portable stove
Rope
Signal flare
Water purification tablets

 Instructions:

Individually (2 minutes): Team members rank the items from 1–12.

Team Discussion (8 minutes): Come to a consensus on a final ranking as a group.

Debrief (5 minutes): Each team explains their top 3 and bottom 3 choices and why.

(Optional twist) Reveal a survival expert's ideal ranking and compare.

 Debrief Prompts:

What strategy did your team use to prioritize items?

Was there any disagreement? How did you resolve it?

How did your team handle decision-making under time pressure?