

Title:	Problem Solving in the Workplace.
Level:	Entry Level 3
Credit value:	2
GLH:	20
Unique Reference Number:	J/505/0398
Sector Subject Area:	14.1: Foundations for Learning and Life.
Aim:	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to recognise workplace problems, identify methods for solving them, and select appropriate problem-solving approaches.
Assessment Type:	Assessment of this unit will be through an internally set and internally assessed portfolio of evidence.
Assessment Guidance:	Assessment decisions for knowledge-based learning outcomes may be made through oral questioning, written tests, assignments or practical observation.

Learning outcomes	
<i>The learner will:</i>	
1. Be able to recognise problems that occur in the workplace.	
Delivery content:	
<p>The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to identify common workplace problems, understand why these problems occur, and recognise the impact they can have.</p> <p>The learner must:</p> <p>1.1 State two problems that can occur in the workplace: 1.2 Give reasons why the identified problems may arise:</p>	
2. Be able to identify methods for solving problems in the workplace.	

<p>Delivery content:</p> <p>The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to identify practical methods for solving workplace problems and recognise sources of information or support available.</p> <p>The learner must:</p> <p>2.1 Identify methods for solving two given problems: 2.2 State sources of information or support available for the methods described:</p>
<p>3. Know how to select a problem solving method.</p>
<p>Delivery content:</p> <p>The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to compare different problem-solving approaches, evaluate their suitability, and make informed decisions about preferred solutions.</p> <p>The learner must:</p> <p>3.1 Identify two different ways in which a given problem could be solved: 3.2 State preferred solution and give a reason:</p>

<p>Scope of Training</p> <p>The Scope of Training identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this unit. This is the minimum that is expected but tutors are expected to include other areas, knowledge of which will benefit their learners, based on location, types of work available and from the tutors own professional experience.</p>	
<p>Requirements</p>	
<p>1.1: Two problems</p>	<p>Definition: Two problems that can occur in the workplace are specific issues, difficulties or challenges that disrupt normal work activities, such as equipment failures, communication</p>

	<p>breakdowns, scheduling conflicts, staff absences or resource shortages.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining what workplace problems are and how they affect operations. • Teaching learners to identify different types of problems in various workplace settings. • Providing clear examples such as "the printer is broken", "two people are scheduled for the same shift", "we ran out of supplies" or "a team member called in sick". • Supporting learners to recognise both minor and major workplace problems. • Reinforcing that identifying problems is the first step to solving them. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming common problems in different types of workplaces. • Analysing case studies showing workplace problems. • Discussing problems learners have observed in work experience or volunteering. • Categorising problems by type (equipment, people, communication, resources).
<p>1.2: Problems may arise</p>	<p>Definition:</p> <p>Reasons why problems may arise are the underlying causes or factors that lead to workplace difficulties, such as lack of training, poor communication, inadequate resources, human error, equipment age or unclear procedures.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the difference between problems (what went wrong) and causes (why it went wrong). • Teaching learners to think critically about root causes of problems.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing clear examples such as "the machine broke because it's old", "there was a conflict because instructions were unclear" or "we ran out because no one checked stock levels". • Supporting learners to understand cause and effect relationships. • Reinforcing that understanding causes helps prevent future problems. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using fishbone diagrams or "5 whys" technique to explore causes. • Discussing how the same problem can have different causes in different situations. • Role-playing scenarios to identify why problems occurred. • Analysing whether problems were preventable and how.
<p>2.1: Methods for solving</p>	<p>Definition:</p> <p>Methods for solving problems are practical approaches, strategies or actions that can be taken to address and resolve workplace difficulties, such as repairing equipment, improving communication, reallocating resources, providing training or changing procedures.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining what problem-solving methods are and why having multiple options is useful. • Teaching learners about different problem-solving approaches for different types of problems. • Providing clear examples such as "fix the broken equipment", "ask for help from a supervisor", "order more supplies", "swap shifts with a colleague" or "create a checklist". • Supporting learners to match solutions to specific problems.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcing that good solutions address the root cause, not just symptoms. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming multiple solutions for given problems. • Evaluating which solutions are practical and which are not. • Learning systematic problem-solving frameworks. • Practising applying different methods to different problem types.
<p>2.2: Sources of information or support</p>	<p>Definition: Sources of information or support are people, resources or services that can provide guidance, assistance or expertise to help solve workplace problems, such as supervisors, colleagues, instruction manuals, IT support, HR departments or external specialists.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining what sources of support means in workplace contexts. • Teaching learners to identify appropriate sources for different types of problems. • Providing clear examples such as "ask your manager", "check the user manual", "contact IT support", "speak to an experienced colleague" or "call the supplier". • Supporting learners to understand when and how to seek help. • Reinforcing that using available support is professional and efficient. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating directories or lists of support sources for different problems. • Role-playing asking for help appropriately. • Discussing what to do if initial sources cannot help.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practising explaining problems clearly when seeking support.
<p>3.1: Two different ways</p>	<p>Definition: Two different ways to solve a problem are alternative approaches or methods that could each potentially address the same workplace difficulty, allowing comparison and evaluation before choosing the best solution.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining why considering multiple solutions is important. • Teaching learners to generate alternative approaches to the same problem. • Providing clear examples such as "we could repair the machine OR we could replace it", "we could work overtime OR we could hire temporary help". • Supporting learners to think creatively about different options. • Reinforcing that different solutions have different advantages and disadvantages. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using brainstorming techniques to generate alternative solutions. • Creating pros and cons lists for different approaches. • Discussing how different people might solve the same problem differently. • Evaluating solutions based on cost, time, effectiveness and resources.
<p>3.2: Preferred solution</p>	<p>Definition: A preferred solution is the chosen problem-solving method from available options, selected based on rational criteria such as effectiveness, cost, time, resources available or likelihood of success, with clear reasoning for the choice.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining what it means to make a reasoned choice between options.• Teaching learners to evaluate and compare solutions using criteria.• Providing clear examples of reasoning such as "I prefer this solution because it's quicker", "This option is better because it costs less" or "This approach will work best because we have the right tools".• Supporting learners to articulate their reasoning clearly.• Reinforcing that good decisions are based on logical thinking, not just preference. <p>Teaching could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practising decision-making with clear criteria.• Comparing solutions using structured evaluation tools.• Discussing how to justify choices to others.• Reflecting on whether chosen solutions worked as expected.
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