



STRATEGIC PROBLEM SOLVING IN BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

United Kingdom

UNIT SPECIFICATION

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Unit Title

Strategic Problem Solving in Business and Management

Credit value

The credit value for this unit is 30

30 credits equivalent to 300 hours of teaching and learning
(10 hours is equivalent to 1 credit)

Guided learning hours (GLH) = 50 hours

GLH includes lectures, tutorials and supervised study. This may vary to suit the needs and requirements of the learner and/or the approved centre of study.

Directed learning = 50 hours: This includes advance reading and preparation, group study, and undertaking research tasks.

Self-managed learning = 200 hours: This includes completing assignments and working through the core and additional reading texts. It also includes personal research reading via other physical and/or electronic resources.

Learning outcome Learner will:	Assessment criteria Learner can:
1.0 Understand the nature of problem identification and classification	1.1 Explain what is meant by a problem 1.2 Explain who problem owners are and their role in problem solving 1.3 Differentiate between resolving a problem, solving a problem and dissolving a problem 1.4 Give an account on the classification of problems 1.4.1 Differentiate between complex and simple problems, well defined and ill-defined problems, and tame and wicked problems 1.5 Explain what is meant by restructuring a problem and evaluate its significance 1.6 Explain what is meant by a boundary problem
2.0 Understand the general problem solving model	2.1 Give an account on the general problem solving model with respect to the following stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The mess - Data gathering - Problem definition - Idea generation - Solution finding - Gaining acceptance - Following problem solving model
3.0 Understand the decision making process in problem solving	3.1 Analyse the relationship between problem solving and decision making 3.2 Explain the principle of bounded rationality 3.3 Explain what is meant by satisficing

<p>4.0 Understand key issues regarding creativity</p>	<p>3.4 Analyse the types of judgement associated with decision making 3.5 Give an account on the phases of the decision making process 3.6 Give an account on the types of business decision</p> <p>4.1 Explain what is meant by creativity and examine its relationship with problem solving 4.2 Analyse the conditions for constructive creativity 4.3 Examine the distinctive creative thinking abilities 4.4 Give an account on George Prince’s Mindspring theory and analyse how it can applied to creativity and problem solving 4.5 Explore the conceptual blocks that make it difficult to think creatively (i.e. perceptual, emotional, cultural, environmental and intellectual blocks)</p>
<p>5.0 Understand the nature of problem solving techniques</p>	<p>5.1 Evaluate brainstorming as a problem solving technique 5.1.1 Analyse typical applications of brainstorming 5.1.2 Examine key considerations that must be made when conducting a brainstorming session 5.2 Evaluate synectics as a problem solving technique 5.2.1 Analyse typical applications of synectics 5.2.2 Examine key considerations that must be made when using synectics 5.3 Evaluate the use of logical thinking in problem solving 5.3.1 Explore the setbacks of logical thinking 5.4 Examine the rational approach to problem solving</p>

6.0 Understand the systems thinking approach to problem solving

6.1 Examine the characteristics of a system

6.2 Differentiate between hard systems thinking and soft systems thinking

6.3 Evaluate the nature of hard systems thinking in problem solving

6.4 Evaluate the nature of soft systems thinking in problem solving

6.4.1 Give an account on the Soft Systems Methodology

Recommended learning resources

Indicative reading	<p>Michael Hicks 1991. Problem Solving in Business and Management: Hard, Soft and Creative. Thomson Learning ISBN: 978-1861523874</p> <p>Antonio Weiss 2011. Key Business Solutions: Essential problem solving tools and techniques that every manager needs to know. Financial Times ISBN: 978-0273750291</p> <p><u>Further reading</u> James Higgins 2005. 101 Creative Problem Solving Techniques: The handbook of new ideas for business. ISBN: 978-1883629052</p>
Learning Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A comprehensive IPED study material is available to aid in learning and research of this unit.• We supply IPED course materials free of charge. Our study materials, which offer quick learning start, are comprehensive, use simple English, and are easy to read and understand. The contents are so sufficient and self-explanatory; that in majority of cases readers do not require further support; although support is always available when you need it.