

Issues Identification Guide

The key question to answer is “what barriers keep you from achieving your goals?”

After independently brainstorming barriers, we now want to pull out the causal issues. First, identify with whom, what or where the problem is occurring. While these can be big or small objects, we want to focus on one object to be as clear as possible. Problems can occur with people, processes, actions, concepts or physical things (e.g. staff hiring, customer acquisition, management, policies, strategic vision, computers, etc.)

For example: Communication is a huge area for issues. Who is this problem occurring with?

- Communication with leadership
- Communication with customers
- Communication with direct supervisors

After identifying with whom, what or where the problem is occurring, consider what the core problem is.

- Communication with direct supervisors is inconsistent
- Communication with direct supervisors is unclear
- Communication with direct supervisors is nonexistent

Next, translate them into the “magic” format of 5-7 words including a noun and a verb. Use the sentence stems below for assistance.

1. _____ is high	12. _____ is nonexistent
2. _____ is low	13. _____ are forgotten (e.g. coastal villages are forgotten)
3. _____ are complex	14. _____ is limiting
4. _____ is burdensome/challenging/difficult	15. _____ creates uncertainty
5. _____ causes confusion/is unclear	16. _____ are not respected/followed/enforced
6. _____ is inadequate	17. _____ has competing priorities
7. _____ are outdated	18. _____ is too frequent
8. _____ does not meet demand	19. _____ are ineffective
9. _____ over consumes resources	20. _____ are nonresponsive
10. _____ is lacking	
11. _____ lacks diversity	

Additional examples:

1. Staff morale is low
2. Management is indecisive
3. Salaries are low
4. Access to computers are limited