

# Creative Problem Solving & Decision Making

## Duration 5 Days

### Introduction

This five day course has been especially designed to help the organization unlock the creative potential of their staff, from senior managers to shop floor employees. The course will demonstrate to participants how to overcome the traditional barriers to creative thinking and to use a wide variety of techniques to stimulate their thinking to produce innovative ideas and new ways of looking at traditional problems. The decision making process is regarded as an extension of this. The program is highly practical and participative with participants using everyday problems from their own work environment as case studies.

### Who Should Attend?

Problem Solving and Decision-Making are two key elements of a manager's role. This five-day course has been especially designed for managers and supervisors who find themselves continually having to solve non-repetitive problems and make vital decisions. The course is designed to help them to learn and practice new techniques in the safe environment of the course. Previous knowledge or experience is not essential, as full training will be given.

### Course Objectives

- ↪ Introduce participants to the principles of creative management
- ↪ Provide an understanding of the rational approach to problem solving
- ↪ Examine the impact of perception upon action
- ↪ Differentiate between a variety of creative styles
- ↪ Develop problem solving and decision making skills
- ↪ Understand how the creative process works
- ↪ Stimulate and encourage participants to utilize both sides of their brain to achieve more creative and higher quality performance

- ↳ Introduce participants to the creative techniques in problem identification, analysis, options and solutions
- ↳ Expose participants to a 'toolbox' of creative ideas for problem solving and decision making Make participants aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the 'lateral' approach to problem solving and decision making
- ↳ Introduce participants to various decision making styles.
- ↳ Manage any change situations that may become necessary.
- ↳ Practice a variety of problem solving and decision making techniques
- ↳ Give presentations relating to the problem solving activities.

### Course Outline:

#### **1. Introduction to the Course**

• Welcome and administration • What you will learn in the next five days • What are your own objectives for the course • How the course is structured • How the teaching will be carried out • Group work and group presentations Effective team players

#### **2. What is a Problem?**

- Types of problems - Distinguishing between a problem and a decision - Understanding the Rational Problem Solving Process - Finding the 'root cause' - Problem definition - Using Problem Description Sheets - Exercises in solving problems improving communication skills for team leadership

#### **3. What is a Decision?**

- Rational Decision-making - The limitations of linear thinking - The Creative Thinking Process - Right and Left Brain Activities - Adapters and Innovators - Other Theories of Creativity Objective setting and monitoring

**4. Barriers to Creative Problem Solving** - The Eleven Major Barriers to Creative Problem Solving - Overcoming redundant paradigms - Preventative action - Tackling performance problems Creative Problem Solving Techniques

- Techniques that you can practice on your own - Techniques that you can practice in a group - Creative Problem Solving and Decision-Making Exercises

### **5. How the Mind Works**

• The brain, personality and behavior • Right brain/left brain activities  
• Effects of the traditional educational system • Adaptor and innovators • Theories of creativity

### **6. Evaluating and choosing the best solutions**

- Using a range of techniques to reach the best decision - Mind mapping and brainstorming - Exercises in Choosing the Best Solution

### **7. Managing any necessary changes**

- Use of Lewin's Force Field Analysis - Use of Kottler and Schlesinger's Analysis - The Three Phases of Change - The five phases of change - Exercises in Planning & Managing Change

### **8. Barriers to Creativity**

• Paradigm paralysis • 'Scientific management' • Fear of being ridiculed • Fear of losing 'ownership' of an idea • Imposing unnecessary constraints • Being over-serious • Transactional analysis • Believing that all creative ideas come from 'experts' • Believing that creativity diminishes with age • Believing that women are not as creative as men • Making instant judgments