Checklist – Top Tips: How to Problem Solve

"Problems are to the mind what exercise is to the muscles, they toughen and make you stronger." **Norman Vincent Peale**

Here are 10 ways to improve your problem solving muscles:

1. **Be positive**. Negativity reduces our creativity.

2. View your problems as **opportunities**.

3. Specifically **identify and understand** each problem. Use techniques such as the fishbone technique to help.

4. Don't just sit in your normal seat to problem solve - **change your outlook.** Hire a room off-site, go for a walk, be in nature, use colours, move, sing, and use lots of whiteboard.

5. Explore a **range of options**.

6. **Clarify your goal** to help you select the right option.

7. Ask **open ended questions** to spur solutions. Closed questions tend to get short answers. Ask 'What would improve morale in the team?', rather than 'Would flexible working improve morale?'.

8. **Brainstorming** really does work. Read this blog for an excellent process on how to brainstorm: https://bit.ly/35DQqbL

9. **Language matters.** Focus on "Yes, and…" rather than "No, but…".

10. Timing is important. The option may have been implemented before, yet it wasn't the right time. Sometimes we veto **options too quickly.**

The Development Company is a leading edge training company, dedicated to enable people to be the best the best they can be. Problem solving is a core skills of project management, managing our time effectively, and everyday decision making.

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