

PROBLEM SOLVING

Core skills for growing leaders

Problem solving

- Problem solving is an *important but difficult skill* for youth and adults
 - Easier to teach as a set of clear steps
- *Problem solving steps: YES I CAN*
 - I = Identify the problem
 - C = Consider possible solutions (brainstorming!)
 - A = Analyze the pros and cons of possible solutions
 - N = Now choose one to try
 - Repeat as needed!

Identify the problem

- State the problem
- Avoid placing blame!
 - Teamwork is important to solving many problems, and blaming others hurts cooperation
- Spend time trying to understand the problem, and things that contribute to it

Consider possible solutions

- Come up with as many solutions as possible
- Brainstorm openly – no idea is a bad idea!
 - Thinking of pros and cons comes *next*, so don't turn down any ideas yet!

Analyze possible solutions

- For each possible solution, think of the pros and cons
- *Feasibility* – can I (or can we) do this with the resources, time, help, etc. that I have?
- *Outcome* – how likely is this solution to solve my problem?
- *Impact* – how does the cost, and the short- and long-term consequences, compare to the benefit?

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Now choose one and try!

- Pick a possible solution
- Try it out
- Evaluate how successful it was
 - Know that it sometimes takes many tries to solve a problem, and even then there can be room to improve!
- Go back to the problem solving steps if needed!
