

The McKinsey Approach To Problem Solving

The McKinsey Approach To Problem Solving The McKinsey Approach to Problem Solving: A Comprehensive Guide The McKinsey approach to problem solving is renowned worldwide for its structured, data-driven methodology that helps organizations address complex challenges efficiently. Developed and refined over decades by McKinsey & Company, one of the most prestigious management consulting firms, this approach emphasizes logical reasoning, collaboration, and rigorous analysis to arrive at actionable solutions. Whether tackling strategic issues, operational inefficiencies, or organizational transformations, the McKinsey problem-solving method provides a robust framework that can be adapted across industries and business sizes. In this article, we will delve into the core principles of the McKinsey approach, explore its step-by-step process, and highlight best practices for applying this methodology to real-world problems. By understanding and implementing these principles, organizations and consultants can improve decision-making quality, accelerate problem resolution, and foster sustainable growth.

Core Principles of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Approach

The foundation of the McKinsey problem-solving approach rests on several key principles that ensure efficiency and efficacy:

- Structured Problem Solving - Breaking down complex problems into manageable parts
- Using frameworks and models to organize thinking
- Developing hypotheses early to guide analysis
- Data-Driven Decision Making - Emphasizing evidence over assumptions
- Collecting relevant data systematically
- Validating hypotheses through facts
- Hypothesis-Driven Methodology - Formulating initial hypotheses based on experience and intuition
- Testing hypotheses iteratively
- Refining understanding with new data
- Collaborative Teamwork - Engaging stakeholders across functions
- Promoting diverse perspectives
- Ensuring buy-in for solutions
- Focus on Actionability - Prioritizing solutions that are practical and implementable
- Developing clear recommendations
- Establishing measurable outcomes

The Step-by-Step Process of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Framework

The process can be summarized into a series of logical, sequential steps that guide a problem from initial identification to final solution implementation.

1. Defining the Problem Clearly - Clarify the scope and objectives - Engage stakeholders to understand expectations - Formulate a precise problem statement
2. Structuring the Problem - Break down the overarching problem into smaller, logical components - Use frameworks such as

issue trees or MECE (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive) principles - Identify key drivers and hypotheses

3. Developing Hypotheses - Generate initial assumptions about causes and solutions - Prioritize hypotheses based on potential impact and feasibility - Prepare to test these hypotheses with data

4. Data Collection and Analysis - Gather relevant qualitative and quantitative data - Use primary research, surveys, interviews, and secondary sources - Analyze data to validate or refute hypotheses

5. Synthesizing Insights - Interpret analytical results - Identify patterns, trends, and root causes - Reassess and refine hypotheses accordingly

6. Developing Recommendations - Translate insights into practical actions - Consider implications, risks, and resource requirements - Ensure solutions are aligned with organizational goals

7. Communicating Findings - Prepare clear, concise reports or presentations - Tailor messaging to different audiences - Highlight the rationale behind recommendations

8. Implementing Solutions and Monitoring - Develop action plans with timelines and responsibilities - Support change management efforts - Establish KPIs to track progress and impact

Applying the McKinsey Approach: Best Practices and Tips

While the process provides a structured roadmap, effective application requires discipline and adaptability. Here are some best practices:

- Develop a Hypothesis-First Mindset - Avoid analysis paralysis by hypothesizing early - Use hypotheses to focus data collection efforts
- Prioritize Issues Based on Impact - Use impact-effort matrices to identify high-value problems - Allocate resources accordingly
- Leverage Frameworks for Clarity - Issue trees for problem decomposition - Porter's Five Forces for industry analysis - The 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) for marketing issues
- Engage Stakeholders Throughout - Ensure continuous communication - Incorporate diverse perspectives to enrich analysis
- Maintain Rigor and Objectivity - Base conclusions on facts, not assumptions - Challenge your own biases regularly
- Iterate and Refine - Be flexible to revisit earlier steps - Use feedback loops to improve solutions

Case Examples Illustrating the McKinsey Problem-Solving Approach

Example 1: Boosting Profitability for a Retail Chain

- Problem Definition: Declining profit margins over the past year
- Structuring: Analyze sales, costs, customer segments, and competitive positioning
- Hypotheses: Possible causes include pricing issues, supply chain inefficiencies, or customer retention problems
- Data Collection: Sales data, customer surveys, supplier reports
- Analysis: Identified high operational costs and declining customer loyalty
- Recommendations: Implement targeted marketing campaigns, renegotiate supplier contracts, optimize inventory management
- Outcome: Profit margins improved by 15% over six months

Example 2: Entering a New Market

- Problem Definition: Assessing the feasibility of expanding into a new geographic region
- Structuring: Market size, competition, regulatory environment, supply chain logistics
- Hypotheses:

Market demand is sufficient; regulatory hurdles are manageable - Data Collection: Market research reports, interviews with local stakeholders - Analysis: Confirmed significant unmet demand and manageable regulations - Recommendations: Develop a phased entry strategy, establish local partnerships - Outcome: Successful market entry with rapid revenue growth Conclusion: The Value of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Approach

The McKinsey approach to problem solving offers a proven, disciplined methodology that enhances decision-making and problem resolution across diverse organizational contexts. Its emphasis on structure, data, hypotheses, and collaboration ensures that solutions are not only effective but also sustainable. By adopting these principles and adhering to the step-by-step process, organizations can navigate complex challenges with confidence and clarity, ultimately driving strategic success. Whether you're a management consultant, a business leader, or a team member tackling operational issues, mastering the McKinsey problem-solving approach can be a transformative skill. It fosters a mindset of analytical rigor, strategic thinking, and continuous improvement—traits essential for thriving in today's dynamic business environment.

Question What are the core steps of the McKinsey problem-solving approach? The core steps include defining the problem, structuring the issue, conducting analyses, synthesizing findings, and developing recommendations, all aimed at providing clear, actionable solutions.

Answer 5 How does McKinsey's issue tree framework enhance problem-solving? The issue tree helps break down complex problems into smaller, manageable components, ensuring a comprehensive understanding and guiding focused analysis.

What role does hypothesis-driven thinking play in McKinsey's approach? Hypothesis-driven thinking encourages forming initial assumptions early on, which are then tested through data analysis, leading to more efficient problem-solving and decision-making.

How important is data analysis in McKinsey's problem-solving methodology? Data analysis is central; it validates hypotheses, uncovers insights, and supports evidence-based recommendations, ensuring solutions are grounded in facts.

In what ways does McKinsey emphasize structured communication during problem-solving? McKinsey advocates for clear, concise communication of findings and recommendations, often using frameworks like MECE (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive) to ensure clarity and completeness.

How does the McKinsey approach incorporate stakeholder engagement? Stakeholder engagement is integrated throughout the process to gather diverse perspectives, ensure buy-in, and tailor solutions to the organizational context.

What tools and frameworks are commonly used in McKinsey's problem-solving process? Common tools include issue trees, MECE frameworks, Pareto analysis, hypothesis trees, and data visualization techniques to structure and analyze problems effectively.

How does the iterative

nature of McKinsey's problem-solving approach improve outcomes? Iterative analysis allows continuous refinement of hypotheses and solutions, leading to more accurate, practical, and sustainable results. The McKinsey Approach to Problem Solving: A Comprehensive Analysis --- Introduction to the McKinsey Problem-Solving Framework In the world of management consulting, McKinsey & Company stands out for its rigorous, structured approach to solving complex business problems. Their methodology has become a gold standard across industries, offering a systematic way to diagnose issues, develop solutions, and implement change. At its core, the McKinsey approach emphasizes clarity, hypothesis-driven thinking, data-driven decision-making, and structured communication. This comprehensive review explores each facet of their problem-solving methodology in detail, shedding light on how organizations can adopt these principles to tackle their most daunting challenges. --- Core Principles of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Approach Before diving into the steps, it's essential to understand the foundational principles that The McKinsey Approach To Problem Solving 6 underpin McKinsey's approach: - Hypothesis-Driven Thinking: Starting with a clear hypothesis or set of hypotheses about the problem or solution, then testing and refining them with data. - Structured Problem Decomposition: Breaking down complex issues into smaller, manageable components. - Fact-Based Analysis: Relying on rigorous data collection and analysis rather than assumptions or intuition. - Prioritization: Focusing on the most impactful issues or levers that will drive the solution. - Iterative Process: Continuously refining hypotheses and solutions based on new insights. - Communication and Storytelling: Presenting findings clearly and persuasively to stakeholders. These principles ensure that problem-solving remains efficient, focused, and impactful. --- The Step-by-Step McKinsey Problem-Solving Process McKinsey's approach typically follows a structured sequence of phases, often summarized as the "Issue Tree" methodology combined with hypothesis-driven analysis. 1. Defining the Problem Clearly - Identify the core issue: Engage stakeholders to understand what truly needs resolution. - Clarify scope and objectives: Determine boundaries, desired outcomes, and success metrics. - Formulate the problem statement: A concise articulation that guides the entire process. Example: Instead of "Improve sales," a well-defined problem might be "Increase quarterly sales revenue by 15% in the North American retail segment within six months." 2. Structuring the Problem - Develop an Issue Tree: A visual decomposition that breaks down the main problem into smaller, answerable components. Steps for creating an issue tree: - Start with the main question or problem statement. - Break it down into sub-issues that contribute to the main problem. - Continue subdividing into smaller issues or hypotheses until each branch is manageable and testable. - Prioritize branches: Focus on issues that have the highest

potential impact or are most uncertain. Example: Main issue: Declining profitability
Branches: - Revenue decline - Cost increases Each branch can be further broken down into specific factors such as customer churn, product mix, supplier costs, or operational inefficiencies.

3. Developing Hypotheses - Hypothesis formulation: Based on experience, intuition, or initial data, propose preliminary explanations or solutions for each component. - Prioritize hypotheses: Target those that are most uncertain or impactful for testing. - Set testing plans: Design analyses or experiments to validate or refute hypotheses. Example: Hypothesis: “Customer churn is primarily driven by poor in-store experience.” Testing plan: Conduct customer surveys, The Mckinsey Approach To Problem Solving 7 analyze customer feedback, and review in-store service metrics.

4. Data Collection and Analysis - Gather relevant data: Use internal data, market research, interviews, or external benchmarks. - Perform quantitative analysis: Use statistical tools, financial modeling, or data visualization to uncover patterns. - Perform qualitative insights: Conduct interviews, focus groups, or expert consultations to supplement quantitative findings. - Validate hypotheses: Check if the data supports or contradicts initial assumptions. - Refine or discard hypotheses: Based on analysis, adjust hypotheses to better reflect reality.

5. Synthesizing Insights - Identify key levers: Focus on the few critical factors that will have the greatest impact. - Develop recommendations: Based on validated insights, craft actionable strategies. - Create a logical story: Ensure the narrative connects analysis, insights, and recommendations coherently.

6. Testing and Validating Solutions - Pilot initiatives: Implement small-scale tests to assess feasibility and impact. - Measure outcomes: Use clear KPIs to evaluate success. - Iterate: Refine solutions based on pilot results before scaling.

7. Implementation and Change Management - Develop an implementation plan: Clarify timelines, responsibilities, and resource needs. - Engage stakeholders: Communicate the benefits and involve teams early. - Monitor progress: Track KPIs continuously to ensure sustained improvement. - Adjust as needed: Be flexible to adapt strategies based on real-world feedback.

--- Tools and Techniques Employed in McKinsey’s Problem Solving McKinsey consultants leverage a set of proven tools to facilitate each stage of the problem-solving process: - Issue Trees: Visual frameworks for breaking down problems. - MECE Principle (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive): Ensuring that components are distinct and comprehensive, avoiding overlaps and gaps. - Issue Prioritization Matrices: Focusing on high-impact areas. - Hypothesis Tree & Testing: Structuring assumptions and systematically verifying them. - Data Visualization: Using dashboards, charts, and heatmaps to identify patterns. - Financial Modeling: Quantifying potential impacts and cost-benefit analyses. - Benchmarking: Comparing against industry standards or best practices. - Scenario Planning: Preparing for different future states. These tools support a

disciplined, analytical approach that minimizes bias and maximizes clarity. --- The McKinsey Approach To Problem Solving 8 Key Attributes of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Culture - Fact-Based Decision Making: Emphasize data over intuition. - Structured Thinking: Approach problems methodically, avoiding ambiguity. - Hypothesis-Driven Approach: Maintain a clear line of sight from initial assumptions to final validation. - Collaborative Engagement: Work closely with clients and stakeholders to ensure buy-in. - Continuous Learning: Use each problem as an opportunity to learn and refine methods. - Rigorous Communication: Present findings and recommendations clearly, often through well-crafted slides and executive summaries. This culture fosters high-quality, sustainable solutions. --- Benefits and Impact of the McKinsey Approach Organizations adopting McKinsey's problem-solving methodology often experience: - Enhanced Clarity: Clear understanding of issues and solutions. - Increased Efficiency: Focused efforts on high-impact areas reduce wasted resources. - Better Decision-Making: Data-driven insights lead to more informed choices. - Sustainable Results: Structured implementation ensures lasting change. - Stakeholder Alignment: Clear communication fosters buy-in and reduces resistance. This disciplined approach has repeatedly demonstrated its effectiveness in transforming organizations and solving complex business challenges. --- Challenges and Limitations While powerful, the approach is not without challenges: - Resource Intensive: Requires significant data collection and analysis. - Dependence on Data Quality: Poor data can undermine findings. - Potential Rigidity: Over-structuring might stifle creativity or overlook intuitive insights. - Change Resistance: Implementing recommendations may face organizational inertia. - Context Sensitivity: Not all problems fit the same mold; customization is often necessary. Awareness of these limitations allows practitioners to adapt the methodology appropriately. --- Conclusion: The Value of the McKinsey Problem-Solving Approach The McKinsey method exemplifies a disciplined, hypothesis-driven, and data-centric framework for tackling complex problems. Its emphasis on structured decomposition, prioritization, and rigorous analysis ensures that solutions are both impactful and sustainable. While it demands effort and discipline, organizations that internalize and adapt these principles stand to benefit from clearer insights, better decision-making, and long-term success. In a rapidly evolving business landscape, mastering this approach can be a decisive factor in maintaining competitive advantage and fostering continuous improvement. Whether applied in strategic planning, operational optimization, or organizational change, the McKinsey problem-solving methodology remains a benchmark The Mckinsey Approach To Problem Solving 9 for excellence in consulting and beyond. problem-solving framework, McKinsey 7S, hypothesis-driven approach, issue trees, structured problem solving, MECE principle, data analysis, client

engagement, strategic consulting, decision-making process

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you likely use problem solving every day it is often taken for granted people do not realize just how wonderful and important problem solving is most people do not even recognize it as a skill in fact most of the time problem solving is just second nature problem solving can actually be defined as an art the art of problem solving is something that we learn at a very young age it helps us through life and is something

we could not live without being able to solve problems is a life skill it is important and it should be taken seriously to get the best results from it looking at problem solving as an art can help you to become more appreciative of it you can begin to use problem solving to its full potential and really respect that problem solving is important you just need to learn more about problem solving as a skill and an art problem solving is a fixture in life you have to be able to solve problems problems pop up every day sometimes they are small and sometimes they are large sometimes solving a problem is a matter of life and death and other times it is merely a matter of keeping your sanity regardless of why you need problem solving you cannot deny that you need it if you are a parent then problem solving is a skill you no doubt could not live without children are full of problems and as the parent it is up to you to help them find the solution sometimes you have to be creative because problems that come up can sometimes be quite difficult to solve without a little creative thinking the same can be said in business businesses have plenty of problems and it is up to the employees to find a way to solve those problems

creative approaches to problem solving caps is a comprehensive text covering the well known cited and used system for problem solving and creativity known as creative problem solving cps cps is a flexible system used to help individuals and groups solve problems manage change and deliver innovation it provides a framework language guidelines and set of easy to use tools for understanding challenges generating ideas and transforming promising ideas into action features and benefits specific objectives in each chapter for the reader this provides a clear focus for instruction or independent learning practical case study introduced in the beginning of each chapter and then completed as a rest of the story toward the end of the chapter this feature provides an application anchor for the reader upgraded mix of graphics these updated and refreshed graphics include tables figures and illustrative images that are designed to provide pictures to go along with the word the aim has been to aid attention retention and practical application enhanced emphasis on flexible dynamic process enables users to select and apply cps tools components and stages in a meaningful way that meets their actual needs a framework for problem solving that has been tested and applied across ages settings and cultures readers can apply a common approach to process across many traditional boundaries that have limited effectiveness creative approaches to problem solving has been and continues to be used as a core text for faculty who are teaching courses in creative problem solving or creativity and innovation as part of an mba program or in education a course on creativity often as a component of certification or endorsement requirements in gifted education it is also used as a core text for those

enrolled in professional development continuing education or executive education programmes

provides step by step guidance on evaluating and implementing creative problem solving solutions ideal for all students who are pursuing careers as decision makers defines creative thinking and dispels misconceptions and negative attitudes that prevent students from taking creative approaches to their work

the mastery of certain skills can only help students succeed in all areas of life no matter what they do or where they do it problem solving is among the most important of these life skills this book is a comprehensive examination of problem solving hurdles students may encounter both in the classroom and on the job site more than an examination of various problem areas this book offers the tools and techniques that will help readers overcome such obstacles and thrive

designed to help problem solvers improve their street smarts this hands on guide examines the components of problem solving and presents a series of graduated exercises drawn from a variety of industrial applications to familiarize reinforce challenge and stretch readers creatively in the problem solving process leads readers step by step through a complete problem solving process from encountering an ill defined problem to identifying the real problem effectively exploring constraints planning a robust approach carrying it through to a viable solution and then evaluating what has been accomplished markets for students new professionals and practitioners

this guide to problem solving is based on a simple system ready gather the information aim evaluate the options and fire implement the solution it can be used for individual team or company decision making and includes examples and exercises

do you have a hard time finding the right solution to the problems in your math physics or science textbooks when solving a problem on your own do you often get stuck not knowing what to do next if so you may have mistakenly learned to solve problems backwards since grade school the top down approach is an effective technique to help you solve all kinds of problems including those you may be struggling with learn this method and watch those problems lose their power over you so you can concentrate on real authentic learning this book is for students at any academic level who are struggling with problems at any subject including stem science technology engineering and mathematics and for instructors who would like

to improve their students learning

the eight papers presented in this monograph are a result of the problem solving and critical thinking research workshop that was held in conjunction with the 1990 national educational computing conference necc the intent of the workshop was to provide a unique forum for researchers to share ideas in a special area of educational computing the monograph provides an overview of the general issues of problem solving and critical thinking in education as well as specialized areas of interest in intelligent tutoring and program construction the papers included in this monograph are 1 problem solving critical thinking and computing an overview cathleen a norris and james l poirot 2 mindstorms revisited computers problem solving and knowledge based instruction karen swan 3 defining programming and logo as vehicles for developing higher order thinking skills jim dunne 4 abstracted knowledge a mid road transfer approach to critical thinking clifton s harris 5 resolving the impasse in software engineering problem solving in program construction warren moseley 6 critical thinking and intelligent tutoring systems james t streib 7 critical thinking and open courseware eduardo rivera and 8 what can we learn from each other s experiences observations of a research oriented workshop by a classroom teacher sylvia robinson references are included with most papers alf

the fun and simple problem solving guide that took japan by storm ken watanabe originally wrote problem solving 101 for japanese schoolchildren his goal was to help shift the focus in japanese education from memorization to critical thinking by adapting some of the techniques he had learned as an elite mckinsey consultant he was amazed to discover that adults were hungry for his fun and easy guide to problem solving and decision making the book became a surprise japanese bestseller with more than 370 000 in print after six months now american businesspeople can also use it to master some powerful skills watanabe uses sample scenarios to illustrate his techniques which include logic trees and matrixes a rock band figures out how to drive up concert attendance an aspiring animator budgets for a new computer purchase students decide which high school they will attend illustrated with diagrams and quirky drawings the book is simple enough for a middle-schooler to understand but sophisticated enough for business leaders to apply to their most challenging problems

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breaking the top of the glass out of the box thinking problems solved 3 need to overcome complex challenges breaking the top of the glass provides practical insights and exercises for effective problem solving practical strategies complex problems 4 looking to foster a culture of creativity and collaboration in your organization learn how with breaking the top of the glass teamwork creativity 5 want to build resilience and adaptability in your personal and professional life innovative problem solving is key and this book can help resilience adaptability in today's fast paced and ever changing world effective problem solving skills have become increasingly important innovative approaches to problem solving can lead to breakthroughs new discoveries and improved outcomes they can foster a culture of creativity and collaboration leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction breaking the top of the glass innovative approaches to problem solving provides practical insights and strategies for developing innovative problem solving skills this book includes case studies real world examples and exercises to help readers apply these concepts to their own lives and work throughout this book you will learn how to break down complex problems into manageable parts generate creative ideas and implement effective solutions you will discover how to think outside the box and come up with unique solutions to challenges in both personal and professional settings whether you are an individual looking to improve your problem solving skills or an organization seeking to foster a culture of innovation breaking the top of the glass is a valuable resource this book will provide you with practical strategies and insights that you can use to overcome obstacles and achieve your goals minghai zheng is a writer based in wuhan china who focuses on writing articles about workplace and management topics he has written hundreds of articles on these topics and is dedicated to sharing his insights and experiences with others who are interested in improving their careers and their businesses

description do you know what problem solving skills are do you want to know how to use problem solving skills many people believe that your feelings are separate or independent of your thoughts but the truth is that feelings are as a result of your thoughts this revelation is very enlightening as well as liberating it is enlightening because you realize that we are responsible for our attitudes because the power to decide our perspective our thoughts and our mood is in our hands when you are aware that you can choose and decide your thinking you discover that you have the ability to best control the circumstances in your life enhance your decision making abilities and live a life that is more productive we think critically with a mindset of problem solving when we depend on reason and not emotions analyze a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives have an open mind to other interpretations

acknowledge new evidence explanations and results are always willing to re evaluate information can separate from personal biases and prejudices be considerate of all possibilities avoid forming quick conclusions just like all other skills developing knowledge in critical thinking or problem solving takes time practice and perseverance step by step critical thinking for problem solving identify the problem first identify if there exists a problem to be solved it is possible that after thinking this through you realize there is no problem but a misunderstanding if then there is a problem you need to identify the exact problem try and analyze the pros and cons of the problem define and state it analyze the problem after identifying the problem now analyze it using different perspectives and ask questions like is it possible to solve it do you need help to solve it the advantage of looking at a problem in different angles is that you may be able to come up with a solution immediately you may also be able to identify a narrow point of view or bias that needs to be expanded brainstorm brainstorming is important as it enables you to come up with several possible solutions when you come up with several possible solutions makes it easier for you to find the ultimate solution decide on the best solution go through your list of proposed solutions take your time and determine what solution amongst the ones you have best suits the situation take action now it is time to implement your solution every problem has a solution do practice approaching problems as opportunities and not as obstacles this will help you enhance your problem solving and critical thinking skills for every problem that you are able to solve it increases your self worth and confidence critical thinking enables you to handle future problems with more skill and increases your experience as you gain perspective in this book we will discuss the following topics what is critical thinking the psychology of critical thinking four goals for critical thinking self direction self discipline self monitoring self correction and many more do we have your attention now are you excited look no more download our book now and know everything about problem solving skills

the universal problem solving approach ah problems why must you annoyingly occur in my life can t i just avoid you unless you re perfect which newsflash nobody is problems are inevitable and should be expected let that sink in for a few seconds now that s not to say that you should go through life always expecting the worst on the contrary you should always be prepared for these natural unfortunate phenomena with a particular set of problem solving skills in order to know how to manage and handle problems effectively when they do occur what do we mean by a particular set of problem solving skills first off don t be taken by the notion of not every problem has a solution yes problems do come in all shapes and sizes however

there are universal ways of tackling them you see the whole point of problem solving is to creatively come up with different solutions to yield the one best outcome possible to do that you have to approach problems formulaically like an equation and work backward systematically to obtain that ideal outcome that's what easier smarter problem solving will show you how to do by giving you a simple roadmap system for universally solving any kind of problem that can creep up in your life generate unlimited solutions to various problems using the xyz equation decipher the heart of a problem with bird's eye view to attack it directly compromise tough issues with difficult people and win reciprocal favors handle more personal internal dilemmas like a true champ winning on top get the desired outcome from messy conflict through the kasg principles and a whole lot more to become an effective problem solver so there is no problem too big to solve whatever it is you are dealing with in life you can now easily plug and play to derive at a simple solution all by following a few simple guidelines solve problem smarter not harder finding solutions to problems has never been this straightforward and serendipitous

in industry or in education everyone keeps bringing up the importance of problem solving skills but what are some of them after facing and solving problems on a continuing basis for over thirty years a computer scientist proposes an initial solution one which raises an even harder problem what is the pedagogy of computer science how can such a new and complex subject be organized and taught so as to best unify its subject matter and provide its students and its professionals with the best tool box for dealing with problems over 40 curious case studies are presented mostly from real world industrial experience some will seem curiously antique but then there are algorithms still in use after being invented over 2200 years ago ridiculous challenges due to machine or system limitations absurdly difficult puzzles faced by co workers mistakes in the most unexpected places and a goodly number of answers too why it is so important to learn long division why computers can't add the theory which forms the nucleus of all video games and especially a fascinating selection of errors cautions and the even more remarkable errors which aren't errors at all but lampposts to larger truths the sort of thing only a chestertonian knows one who has travelled with milo in the lands beyond for the sake of rhyme and reason and the strengthening of the kingdom of wisdom

many individuals studying problem solving consider creativity a special type of problem solving on the other hand many individuals studying creativity view problem solving as a special type of creative performance what is truly the role of creativity in problem solving what is the role of problem solving in creativity and how are problem

solving and creativity related to problem finding this book addresses these questions and fills an obvious need for an overview of the research on problem finding

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