



Fishbone Diagrams — identify issues at a glance

Solutions are great, but only if you correctly understand the problems you’re trying to address. The Fishbone Diagram provides a method for diagnosing all potential issues, big and small.

- 1. IDENTIFY THE EXACT PROBLEM.** Jot the problem down on a Post-it® Super Sticky Note — this will form the “head” of your diagram. Stick it on a Post-it® Super Sticky Dry Erase Surface. From the center of this note, draw a horizontal line out — this line will act as the “spine” from which your team will address the problem — hence the fishbone name.
- 2. DISCUSS AND IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROBLEM.** It may be a transportation issue, a staffing situation, etc. Try to explore as many possibilities as you and your team can. Draw a line off of the diagram’s “spine” for each of the problem’s possible components and label them (i.e. transportation, staffing, etc.).
- 3. BRAINSTORM THE CAUSES THAT COULD BE RESPONSIBLE.** Put these causes on Post-it® Super Sticky Notes and add them to the appropriate component line (off of the diagram’s “spine”).
- 4. FIND SOLUTIONS.** Once complete, you and your team will have a visual outline toward understanding the problem and can begin a more thorough investigation into each of its possible contributing factors.

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