

## Investigating and Problem Solving in Business Establishment

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**ABSTRACT:** Problems are unexpected outcomes in any business establishment and they cannot be avoided. The only thing that businesses can do about it is identifying the problem, identifying the root causes and developing a sustainable solution. Sustainability of the solutions ensures that the problem or related problem is well managed. It also ensures that the problem is identified early before causing problems to business operations. In this paper, the process of investigating and solving a problem is discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** Problem defining, Analysis, Diagnosis, Innovation, Evaluation, Risk, Implementation.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Business operations can be hindered or have reduced efficiency and profitability when there is a problem. Identification of problem that affects a business at any point is important. This enabled them to come up with creative problem solving exploration, bringing their ideas together to come with the best value alternative (Steven Male, 1998). Consequently, the resulting solution will be able to harmonize the different views of the various stakeholders of the business. The business will, therefore, be able to deliver to their clients wants and needs effectively. The process of value management should be able to: all objectives of the stakeholders; rank objectives according to priorities; identify ways of achieving objectives through brainstorming; identify valuable alternatives and provide recommendations for the most effective solution for the issues affecting the business (S. Male, J. Kelly, M. Gronqvist & D. Graham, 2006).

Problem solving is a procedural process that defining the problem, analysis and diagnosis, innovation, evaluation, risk and risk management, implementing and developing a monitoring system.

### 2 DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Allocate enough time to the process and activities involved in knowing what the problem really is and the part or department of the business that is affected. There are some managers who make a mistake of jumping the developing to a solution to problem they don't really know. The solution may be working but will short term. Such cases can result to even magnifying the problem. Identification of the problem enables the business to establish the cause of the problem and subsequently finding the most effective solution.

### 3 ANALYSIS AND DIAGNOSIS

The analysis and diagnosis phase focuses on the root cause of the problem and what favored the occurrence of the problem (J. Aken, H. Berends & H. van der Bij, 2011). When the cause of the problem is identified, the most appropriate solution make be easily achieved. When the causes are not identified the solution that will be developed won't be effective to solve the problem. The effect of the issues being investigated is identified. Additionally, the vulnerability of the business is

identified. There are some factors within the business organization that may have in one way or the other facilitated the problem. These factors are identified as they will help a great deal during development of a solution.

#### **4 INNOVATION**

This process involves brainstorming alternative solutions. Steve Male considers a group to be the most effective method of understanding the problem and the root causes and develop solutions towards the analyzed problem. The group assigned the task of finding the solution will discuss within themselves various solutions. During this step, any idea raised by the group members is useful. The innovation phase is allocated enough time for a good number of ideas that may lead to solutions to be raised. The time will depend on the type and magnitude of the problem being investigated. Steve Male suggests that brainstorming as the creative phase where the group formulates suggestions in regard to the analysis of the problem identified. The solutions suggested by the group members should be able to balance the resources of the business with their objectives.

#### **5 EVALUATION OF THE SOLUTION**

This step involves analysis of the suggestion developed in the previous phase and identifies the best for solving the problem in question. It involves evaluating the alternatives base on feasibility, economical value, client suitability and function suitability. Feasibility of the solutions describes how easy they can be applied in solving the problem. The easily implemented solution is selected as it requires less capital, time and other resources to implement them. In terms of economical value, the solution that best fits within the budget of the business is selected; otherwise implementing the solution will be a problem itself. Steven Blais (2011) argues that the solution should not have negative impact on other operations of the business and must be sustainable to avoid related future problems. The group can assign the alternatives scores in order to come up with a suitable solution. This technique is referred to as arithmetic weighing. Objective hierarchy is another criterion that can be employed to arrive at the solution but it may not be effective as they only provide answers to the value factors of the problem.

#### **6 ASSESSING THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTED SOLUTION**

The developed solution may pose the business to risks in the future. Michael F Dallas (2008) defines risks the unavoidable outcome that can either be of negative or positive impact to the operations of the business. The group should predict any possible risks that the business may experience during and after the implementation of the selected solution. Michael F Dallas (2008) further explains that the impacts and chances of the predicted risks should be estimated. This enables in the development of a risk management plan. The plan should be sustainable in order to update and manage risks throughout the life of the business.

#### **7 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EVALUATED SOLUTION**

Before the onset of implementation, a plan is developed showing how the arrived solution will be implemented and at what time. During development of the plan, individuals are assigned responsibilities for efficient implementation. Implementation process involves elimination of the root cause of the problem. A monitoring system that indicates the progress of the solution in counteracting the problem is developed and included in the plan. In case the solution is not effective in managing the problem, the group will have to go back to the innovation phase to brainstorm the identified problem.

#### **8 CONCLUSION**

The process of identifying problem and coming up with solution is a procedural process that requires a group to discuss various suggestions. Group dynamics is effective at raising suggestion and evaluating the best alternative. The group dynamics helps in solving the problem from various angles. The generated solution may lead to risks and other problems if not analyzed properly. The solution should be developed with consideration of feasibility, economic value, significance, function, the business customers and sustainability.

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