

# Problem Solving and Decision Making (Pt2)

Activate your true potential today!



Freedom Learning - for everyone for life!

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# Key Points Summary

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The 5 Whys Technique A simple but powerful root cause analysis tool developed by Toyota. It involves asking “Why?” repeatedly — usually five times — to get to the root of a problem.

Why It Works:

- Helps identify root causes instead of surface-level symptoms
- Encourages critical thinking and team collaboration
- Promotes long-term solutions over quick fixes

Rules for Using It Effectively:

- Focus on one issue at a time
- Base answers on real data or evidence
- Avoid blame or assumptions
- Keep the chain logical

## Real-Life Example:

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Problem: Laptop won't turn on

1. Why? – The battery is dead
2. Why? – The charger wasn't plugged in
3. Why? – I forgot to plug it in last night
4. Why? – I was too tired after working late
5. Why? – I didn't plan my day well

✓ Root Cause: Poor planning ✓ Solution: Build a daily wind-down checklist

# Exercises

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Exercise 1: Try the 5 Whys Pick a personal or work-related problem:

## Problem

1. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Root Cause: \_\_\_\_\_

Action Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

# Activities to Consolidate Learning

## Activity 1:

Partner with a colleague or friend. Use the 5 Whys method to explore one real issue. Share your findings and proposed actions.

### Problem Identified

### Why (1)

### Why (2)

### Why (3)

### Why (4)

### Why (5)

Activity 2: Pattern Recognition Think of a recurring issue in your work/life. Ask:

- Is it the same surface issue every time?
- Could a deeper cause be responsible?
- What would change if you solved that?

## Notes

## Reflection Questions

- How did it feel to keep asking “Why?”

- Did anything unexpected come up during your analysis?

- How might using 5 Whys improve teamwork or leadership?

Text Field

# Action Plan

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- Identify one persistent issue this week
- Apply the 5 Whys
- Document your answers and solutions
- Take one step toward solving the root cause

## Notes

## Final Summary

Using the 5 Whys is like becoming a detective in your own life and work. It equips you to identify what's really going wrong — not just what's visible. The deeper you go, the stronger and more lasting your solutions will be.

**Good luck, and keep practicing your problem solving!**

“If you do not ask the right questions, you do not get the right answers.” —  
Edward Hodnett