

Problem Wall & Solution Tree

Type: Organizing Ideas, Sharing Ideas, Practicing



What Is It?

Participants create and organize visual representations of problems and solutions.

Why Use It?

Identify and discuss problems related to a topic

Groups similar problems and recognizes trends

Facilitates discussion about contributing factors and potential solutions.

How to Use It

1. Cover a wall with paper and title one-half of it 'problem wall'. On the other half draw a large tree and title it 'solution tree'.
2. Agree on a topic. For example, 'What do you think of our drinking water?' Put this title of the topic at the top of the wall.
3. Cut up lots of 'brick-shaped' pieces of paper and 'leaf-shaped' pieces of paper. Put these in separate piles, with the bricks by the 'problem wall' and the leaves by the 'solution tree'. Put glue or tape nearby for people to stick the leaves and bricks to the wall.
4. Invite people to think about the topic and write problems on separate 'brick-shaped' pieces of paper and stick these on the problem wall.
5. Ask participants to group similar problems on the wall.
6. Now ask participants to consider these problem bricks and think of solutions to them. Invite people to write solutions on the 'leaf-shaped' pieces of paper and stick these on the solution tree.
7. Group together any solutions that are similar.
8. (Optional): Discuss which solutions could be prioritized. You can use a prioritization activity such as "Prioritizing by Dots."
9. Summarize the main points of the discussion.

Trainer Notes

These tools are easy to set up and can be left for participants to complete anonymously. They can be left in places like entryways, dining rooms, or any other place where people gather. Leave clear instructions by the problem wall and solution tree to help people do the exercise themselves.

Variation

Use symbols instead of words for participants with low literacy skills.