

*Providing simple solutions for your success. Discover the potential within YOU!!*

## A Quick Problem-Solving Strategy

One simple and effective technique that will help you solve most of the difficulties your team runs into. *Follow these steps:*

### 1. Define the problem.

Do some research and include all the details. If a series of tasks was mishandled, include notes on each job and try to pinpoint where each error occurred.

### 2. Brainstorm possible causes.

List the factors that contribute to the problem, including those that seem out of your control—such as a customer who changed his mind or any last-minute mechanical problems—and those you know you can influence, including things such as poor performance and faulty methods.



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## Effective E-Mail Message Tips

Effective e-mail messages begin at the top. Save time and set a good example for your staff by keeping these tips in mind as you type:

- **Use short, specific, and concise subject lines** to help others identify your e-mail message's purpose and importance. They also motivate recipients to read and reply.
- **Announce routine items without a lot of fluff.** *Example:* Staff meeting on Wednesday, from 8am to 9am.
- **Send Thank You's in person.** The phrase "Thanks for all your help" screams "mass mailing" and makes your message seem completely impersonal. Make it a point to deliver thanks in person. Your staff will appreciate you taking the time and this will go a long way the next time you ask for help.
- **Use Confidential in the subject line.** Protect privacy by including the word Confidential in the subject line. Otherwise, after multiple replies, the confidentiality may be lost or forgotten.



Source: Sorrell Associates 2001-2005

"After all, the chief business of the American people is business."

— Calvin Coolidge



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Five Tips for Creating an Inspiring Workplace

1. Find out what your boss or your colleagues need for them to be great at their job. Help them get it.
2. Decide what you need to be great at your job. Ask for it!
3. Find ways to bring out the best in others every day.
4. Leverage your talents by understanding what you are really good at and love doing...then do more of it.
5. Change happens when you change. Be a leader.

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## Quotes of the Month

"The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

Albert Einstein

"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore"

Andre Gide

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### 3. Analyze the data.

Try to identify any trends or patterns that could point out underlying problems. Describe how the problem is affecting other departments, your customers or team members' job satisfaction. This information will help you decide if the problem is worth trying to solve. If the consequences are insignificant, it may not be worth your team's effort.

### 4. Generate possible solutions.

Challenge team members to come up with as many solutions as possible. To encourage creative thinking, don't let members judge either the ideas or the team members who present them.



### 5. Agree on one solution.

After you've generated a list of ideas, use consensus to select the most likely solution.

### 6. Develop an action plan.

Discuss and agree upon clearly defined action steps. Assign volunteers to those steps, and then agree on a time frame for each.

Source: *Team Management Briefings*, as adapted from *Managing Quality Through Teams*, Lawrence M. Miller and Jennifer Howard, The Miller Consulting Group, (404)255-6523

## A Little Humor

Three older men were talking about what their grandchildren would be saying about them fifty years from now.

"I would like my grandchildren to say, 'He was successful in business,'" declared the first man.

"Fifty years from now," said the second, "I want them to say, 'He was a loyal family man.'" Turning to the third man, he asked, "So what do you want them to say about you in fifty years?"

"Me?" the third man replied. "I want them to say, 'You sure look good for your age, grandpa.'"




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*John O'Sullivan is the founder of **Aberfoyle Associates**, a company that brings simple, common sense, practical solutions to organizations, large and small. His company provides Coaching and Consulting Services to companies nationwide and is dedicated to helping his clients get better results. In the final analysis, it is **RESULTS** that count; achieve yours now! Call or e-mail for your Complimentary consultation. ([info@aberfoyleus.com](mailto:info@aberfoyleus.com))*