

Focusing on the 'g' in gPDCA to boost your problem solving skills

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How do we solve problems?



gPDCA/9 Step Problem Solving Method



Phase	Step
Grasp the situation	1. Identify the problem in simple terms
	2. Observe and measure the current state
	3. Set a target
	4. Write a problem statement
	5. Analyze the Gap
Plan	6. Plan to test your countermeasure
Do	7. Do test your countermeasure
Check	8. Check the results of your test
Adjust	9. Adjust the plan

What is a problem?

A silhouette of a person in a business suit is captured mid-jump, crossing a gap between two dark, jagged rock formations. The background is a bright blue sky filled with white, fluffy clouds. A bright sun is positioned behind the person, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene conveys a sense of overcoming a challenge or bridging a gap.

A gap between
what is currently
happening...

...and what
should be
happening.

Introductions



- **Name**
- **Role**
- **Aspect of problem solving you'd like to explore more deeply**

The Situation



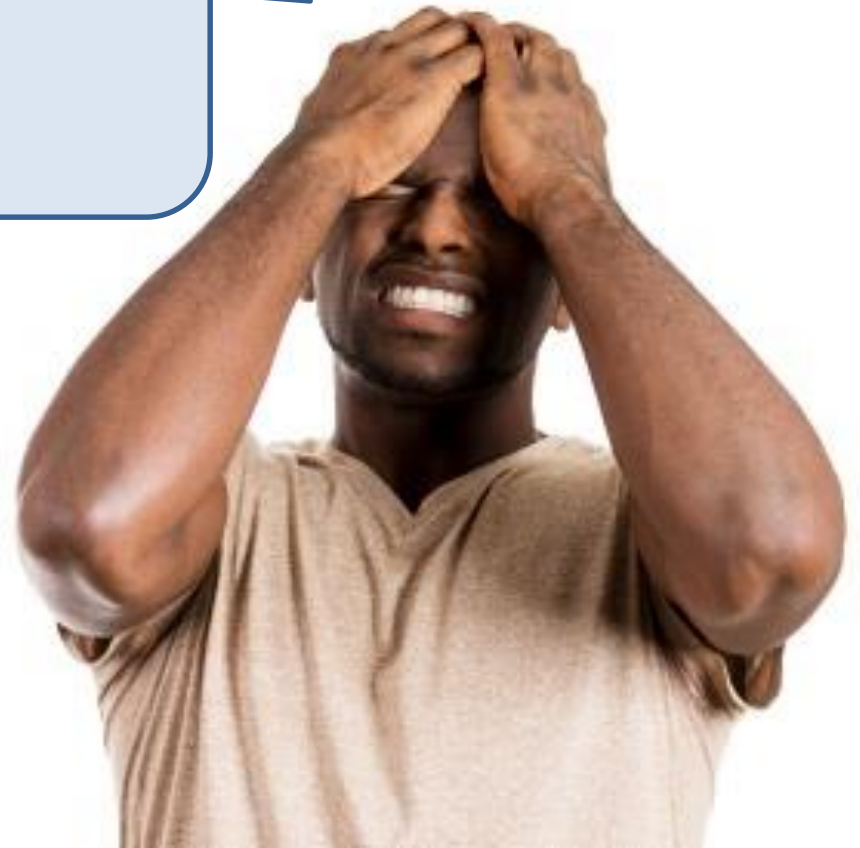
Team



Promise:
25 Days

The Situation

**It took well over
a month!**



Customer

The Situation

**We're explaining
instead of
processing.**

**We're getting
incomplete
forms.**



1. **IDENTIFY** a Problem in Simple Terms



- **Briefly describe the issue and why it matters**
- **Identify how you will measure the problem**

1. Identify a Problem in Simple Terms

Process & Product



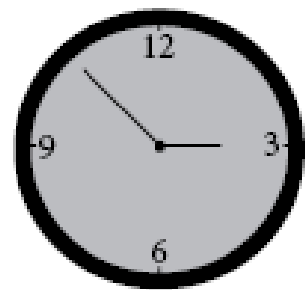
1. Identify a Problem in Simple Terms



Safety



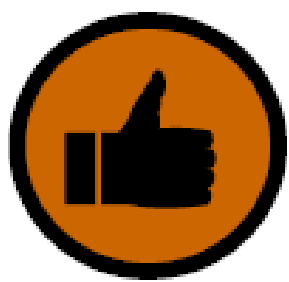
Quality



Time



Cost



Customer Satisfaction



Employee Engagement

Practice

1. Identify a Problem in Simple Terms

- A. Customers are not happy with our process.**
- B. Customers are not filling out forms correctly, so the team has to get more information.**
- C. Customers say it takes too long to have their requests approved. This delays their work.**

2. Observe & Measure Current State

- Create a picture of what's actually happening
- Capture data and facts



2. Observe & Measure Current State

What do I know?

How do I know that?

What more do I need to know?

How will I find out those things?

What do I know?

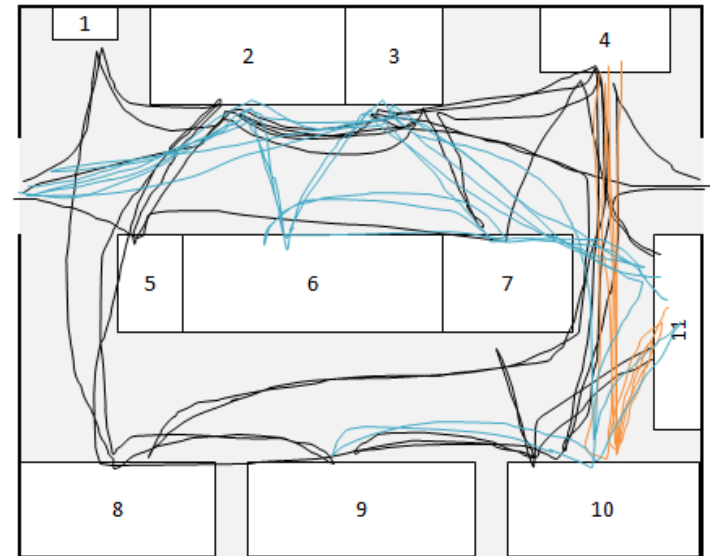
- **The process**
- **Current & past performance**
- **Customer expectations**
- **Requirements**

How do I know that?

What more do I need to know?

How will I find out those things?

2. Observe & Measure Current State



2. Observe & Measure Current State



Telephone Interruptions

Reason	Day					
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total
Wrong number	+++			+++	+++	20
Info request						10
Boss	+++		+++			19
Total	12	6	10	8	13	49

2. Observe & Measure Current State



**Ask a few,
focused
questions**

2. Observe & Measure Current State

Requirements

- **Look**
- **Ask**



Practice

2. Observe & Measure Current State

What do we need to know?

How will we find out?

- **The process**
- **Current & past performance**
- **Customer expectations**
- **Requirements**

Customer Request Process Flow

Wait:
2 - 4 days

Wait:
3 - 8 days

Wait:
1 day

Specialist 1

Receive
Request

Specialist 2

Analyze
Request

Specialist 3

Approve
Decision

Specialist 1

Send Decision
Letter

Touch: 2 - 10 m
Cycle: < 15 m

Touch: 30 - 60 m
Cycle: < 12 days

Touch: 15 - 25 m
Cycle: < 17 days

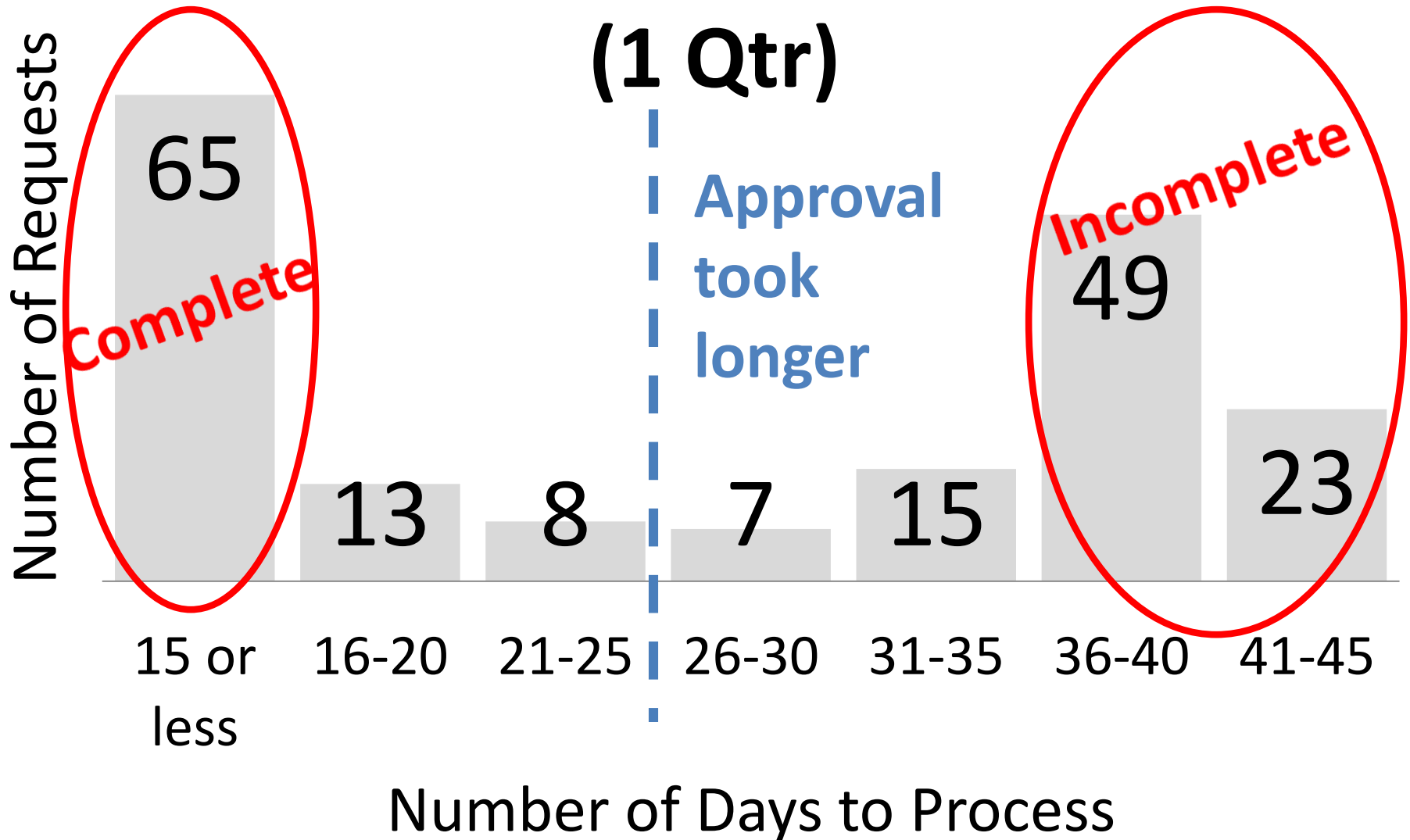
Touch: 10 m
Cycle: < 2 days

40%
received
incomplete



Process Time:
6 - 44 days

Time to Process Requests



Customer Feedback

**We're confused
about what's wrong
with our request.**

**We want
approval in
15 days.**



Requirements

45 Days

vs.

25 Days

- **WAC** (WA Admin. Code)

- What we've said for years...started with a previous supervisor



3. Set a Target



- Describe what *should be happening* and by when
- In setting a target, consider:
 - ✓ **Customer expectations & demand**
 - ✓ **Requirements**
 - ✓ **Actual performance**

3. Set a Target

- A. By the end of next quarter, process all customer requests within 15 days.**
- B. Decrease processing time by 50% by the end of next quarter.**
- C. Process customer requests 50% faster by implementing a new request system.**

4. Write a Problem Statement

Describe the measurable gap and when it will be closed



Problem Statement Formula

Currently . . .

(what's happening now)

Compared to our target of . . .

(what should be happening)

Which we want to reach by . . .

(date)

4. Write a Problem Statement

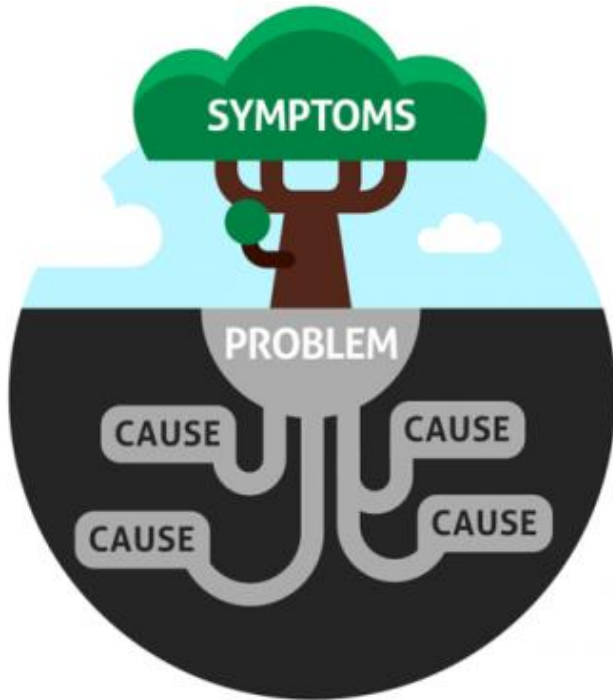
Currently...

Compared to our target of...

Which we want to reach by...

Currently, we take up to 45 days to process all requests, compared to our target of 15 days, which we want to reach by the end of next quarter.

5. Analyze the Gap



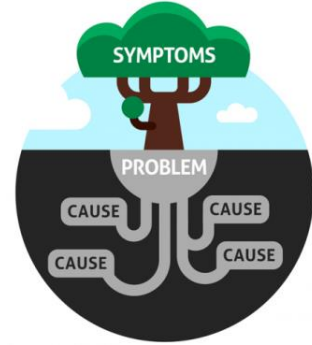
- **Identify actionable root cause(s) of the gap**
- **Propose effective countermeasures to eliminate the cause(s)**

Practice

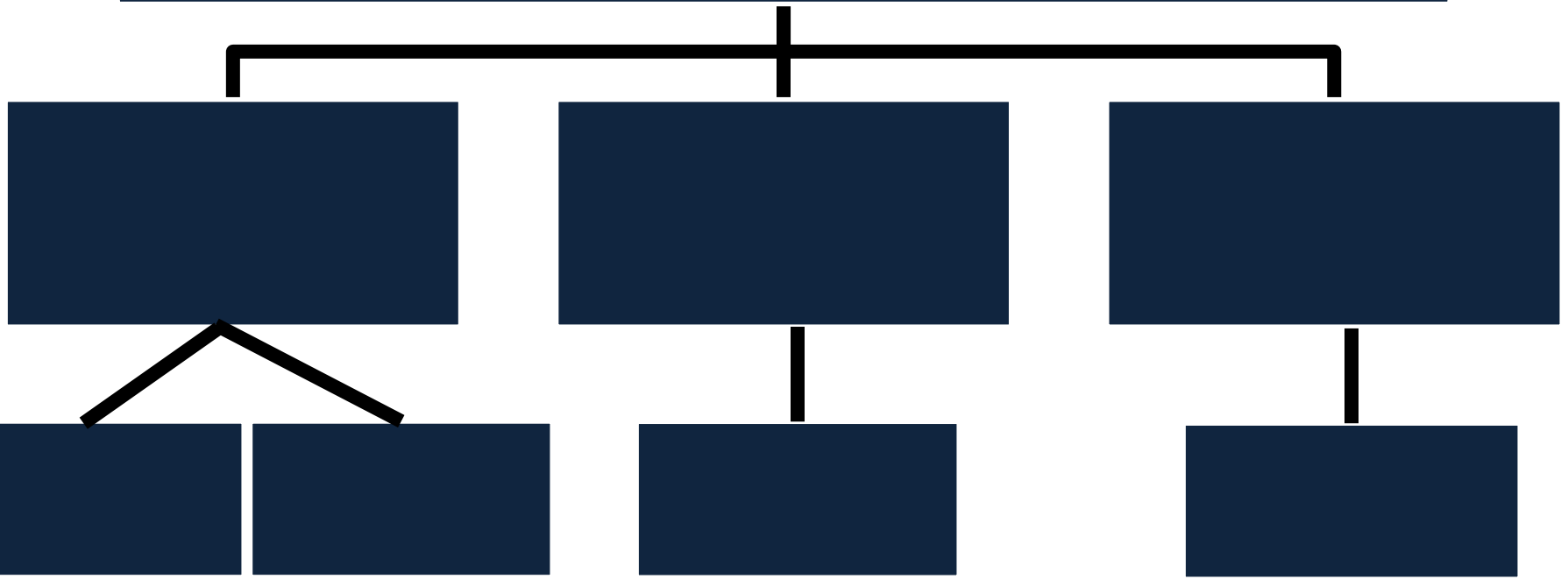
5. Analyze the Gap

- A. Why is it taking so long to process customer requests?**
- B. Why can't we process requests in 15 days?**
- C. Why do some requests take 45 days instead of 15?**

5. Analyze the Gap



Why do some requests take 45 days instead of 15?



Why do some requests take 45 days instead of 15?

Because

We have to contact customers to get additional information

Why?

Because

Customers leave out required information in Part 1

Why?

Because

Customers are confused by the new label "ORG"

Why?

Because

The text in the request form differs from the text in the instruction packet

Why?

Because

We changed the label text on the form, but not in the instruction packet

Why?

Because

There is no prompt to update the instruction packet when we change the form

5. Analyze the Gap

The text in the request form differs from the text in the instruction packet.

There is no prompt to update the instruction packet when we change the form.

Align the text

Create prompt

gPDCA/9 Step Problem Solving Method



Phase

Step

Grasp the situation

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Key Points

- 1. Steps build on each other.**
- 2. Resist the urge to skip steps.**
- 3. Taking the time to grasp the situation will pay off immensely.**
- 4. Let curiosity be your guide.**
- 5. Find simple, cheap ways to observe and measure.**

Questions & Answers



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