

Problem Solving

Lesson Plan

DURATION: 60 Minutes

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture/Case Study

REFERENCES: Student Guide, *Leadership: 2000 and Beyond*

TEACHING AIDS/HANDOUTS: Student Guide, slide presentation

READING ASSIGNMENT: Student Guide

Lesson Objective:	Comprehend how to use the problem solving model in command situations.
Behavioral Objectives: At the end of this segment you will be able to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the problem solving model.2. Solve a sample problem using the model.

Lesson Strategy

This segment is designed to introduce the problem solving model to new commanders and show them how using it will enhance their command.

Emphasis should be placed on defining the process and on its application. First, explain the steps involved in the problem solving model. Using the case study provided (or one locally composed), have the students complete the exercise. Let them do most of the work and elect a leader for the exercise. After the exercise, critique their performance. Assess their application of the process, not their solution to the problem.

The teaching outline provides an introduction, outline of the main points, and a conclusion to be adapted as required to meet the needs of a particular wing. The presenter should personalize the lesson to reflect the unique characteristics of the wing.

Lesson Outline

MAIN POINTS:

- I. The Problem Solving Model
- II. The Case Study

Teaching Plan

Lesson Objectives

Comprehend how to use the problem solving model in command situations.

ATTENTION:

One of the most often used and least understood skills people use are problem solving skills. Problem solving skills reflects making informed choices – identifying the dilemma, options, and consequences. Developing this skill is vital to your success as a commander.

MOTIVATION:

The classic problem solving model is the process through which we solve problems everyday – though we don't always recognize it. Gaining a better understanding of the problem solving process will enable you to work with your people to make better decisions – make more informed choices – for your unit. The solutions you arrive at using this process will be of higher quality and better tailored to suit your needs.

OVERVIEW:

This segment will describe the problem solving model, and give you the chance to apply it in a case study. You will be given a sample problem, and your task will be to solve it using this model. You'll see that the process lends itself to finding logical answers, and you'll recognize the skills as those you may already use in your daily lives.

Transition:

STATE: Solving problems is an everyday occurrence, and we all go about the process in roughly the same way. We all make certain assumptions and choices when we solve problems. The classic problem solving model gives the process a structure. Let's examine the model by "going to lunch."

Note: Use the example from the student guide text to illustrate the model.

MP I. The Problem Solving Model

- A. Problem Set-up
- B. The problem solving model process:
 - 1. Recognize the problem.
 - 2. Gather data.
 - 3. List possible solutions.
 - 4. Test possible solutions.
 - 5. Select best solution.
 - 6. Implement solution.

MP II. Case Study

- A. Read problem.
- B. Use the model to solve problem.
- C. Critique process.

Conclusion

SUMMARY:

Using the classic problem solving model can help you to more effectively solve the complex problems your unit deals with everyday. It can help you and your staff get a handle of the problem, logically discuss the possibilities and consequences, and be more confident in the choices you make – because they are informed choices.

CLOSURE:

The problem solving model helps you make more informed choices. Use it in your unit, in your life, and be more confident in your decisions.

Problem Solving

Sample Problem

EXERCISE OBJECTIVE: Apply what has been learned from the Problem Solving segment and reach a workable solution to the case presented.

You are the commander of the Pricetown Composite Squadron, and have been in the job for 6 months. Your squadron consists of 14 senior members and 22 cadets. Your staff is competent and eager to participate in all facets of the program.

The Cadet Commander on your staff, C/1Lt Steven Spurance, has brought up a question at your monthly staff meeting. He says that the classes held for his cadets utilize video cassettes more and more frequently. When instructors plan to use videos in their classes, they must bring their own VCR and monitor or rent one from a local rental store because the squadron doesn't own its own.

Cadet Spurance wants to know if the squadron can purchase VCR/monitor to both make it easier for the instructors to use video, and make it more fun for his cadets who like the classes more with video.

Everyone thinks its a good idea until the Finance Officer informs you that the squadron only has \$225 in the checking account. Though this disappoints the staff, they still feel that getting a VCR/monitor is a good idea. You agree. How do you and your staff solve this problem?