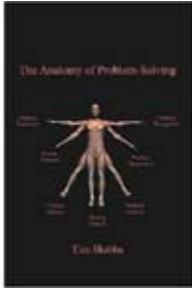


What's New in Business

August 22, 2007

Problem solving

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[The Anatomy of Problem-Solving](#)



Terry Zarsky – Pikes Peak Librarian

by Tim Hobbs, Hobbs Technical Consulting, 2007.

Problem solving seems to be a skill that is becoming harder to find in employees today. The costs of doing business can be greatly increased if problem solving is not applied correctly when things go wrong in the workplace. [Tim Hobbs](#) shares with us the process he has successfully used to problem solve in all aspects of his life. He walks through the steps necessary to make sure that you address and fix the cause of the problem and not just apply a band-aid to the symptom currently causing problems for you and your company. Besides providing a step-by-step process and showing how each works and their benefits he uses true stories to illustrate each step. Seeing how these steps were applied in various environments makes it easier to visualize how we can apply them in our lives.

Much of the book focuses on the high tech arena, but the true stories come from the Navy, various jobs Tim held and his personal life (when the gas heater fails to work properly at home.) Each step is illustrated by using the story of the gas heater to apply all of the steps in sequence and to show the value of taking each step in order to make sure all aspects of the problem are considered before trying to “fix” things only to have them breakdown again at a more inopportune time. The additional true stories in each step help show the various environments where these steps have been successfully applied as well. The seven steps include:

- problem recognition
- problem observation
- problem analysis
- develop solution
- validate solution
- sustain solution
- problem evaluation.

The Anatomy of Problem Solving is a quick read and an extremely useful tool in helping to develop problem-solving skills in you. Learning to do this at a higher level will make you a much more valuable employee (and partner.)