

# Advanced “Agile” Problem Solving

*Deliver sprint outputs, “first time every time”*

## WHAT IT IS



*The most obvious reason why Project Professionals are struggling to manage a multifaceted project environment like “AGILE” is the lack of a common problem solving approach to foster consensus and commitment!*

“Agile” troubleshooting skills performed by **Project Staff** are about using effective, visible and user-friendly tools and templates to allow them to dig deeper into incidents and possible solutions in a structured and repeatable way. The most successful problem solvers are better at asking the right interrogative questions to the right SMEs. They get certain practices right to ensure success:

- Identifying the **CORRECT STARTING POINT** – Problem solvers need to understand that the “devil lies in the detail”. When faced with multiple sprints the aim is to get all the stakeholders to agree quickly what the problem is and how to address it with the most appropriate approach.
- Investigate all the **RELEVANT DIMENSIONS** represented in a problem situation – This approach ensures the team look at all the relevant systemic elements at different and unique angles involved to arrive at the correct solution.
- Learning how to ask the **RIGHT QUESTIONS** from the right SMEs to get the right answer! Simply asking the right person uniquely structured questions will deliver the right answer, first time every time!
- Design the **MOST EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS** to remove causes and finding unique solutions for seemingly unsolvable issues typical of multiple sprints and other unique Agile situations.

The way to do this is through the use of templates and structured questions that will help you leverage what you already know about the incident. The “margin of excellence” however, is found in the investigator who understands and appreciates the usefulness of these tools and templates in a structured questioning environment and willingness to apply it – at every opportunity.

We will demonstrate, and you will learn and apply these tools/templates with its unique worked questions during a one-day or two-day intensive workshop and address the all too familiar challenges for today’s “real time” time pressured incident environments.

## ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS



*What you would acquire in this day!*

- The realization that the team is only going to be as good as their ability to resolve new issues quickly, correctly and permanently.
- Well proven and tested problem solving tools and templates specially designed for Agile environments with sprints and scrums.
- Remove irrelevant information very early in the investigation process, which eliminates “trial & error” attempts.
- The absolute importance of asking the “right question from the right person to get to the right factual data.”
- The realization that a minimalistic approach with “relevant data” can provide much faster and more accurate answers than an aimless brainstorming or problem discussion exercise.
- The understanding that alignment of stakeholder expectations and continual collaboration with same stakeholders could solve a multitude of problems pro-actively.
- A workable strategy of how to address each type of possible “Agile” problem situation such as; lack of accountability, scope creep, vendor issues, role clarity, poor coordination, and poor control.

## CONTENTS

*Utilize the  
KEPNERandFOURIE®  
thinking processes and  
templates to:*

- Identify the minimum cultural requirements (Requirements Analysis) to address any problem or challenge through collaborative practices.
- Systematically identify the minimalistic data needed (Factor Analysis) to solve a problem or to design a new solution.
- Identify the correct information sources to provide critical inputs (SME Analysis technique), and how to extract the data from these resources.
- Engineer the ability to balance “level of change” with that of “system stability” (Best Balanced Choice)&(Priority Impact Analysis).
- Engineer consensus and buy-in at all levels of impact (Impact Buy-in Analysis) during a project’s lifecycle.

**EARN  
PROFESSIONAL  
PROBLEM  
SOLVER  
CERTIFICATE &  
16 PDUs**

## RESOLUTION PROCESSES

1. **PriorityWise**  
How to find core issues
2. **ThinkingWise**  
How to find underlying reasons of a performance issue
3. **CauseWise**  
How to find technical & root cause
4. **SolutionWise**  
How to make a choice
5. **SolutionWise (Max4)**  
How to develop an innovative solution
6. **RiskWise**  
How to mitigate risks

## FACILITATOR

### Mat-thys Fourie

*Dr. Mat-thys Fourie is currently chairman of Thinking Dimensions Global and Managing Director of Thinking Dimensions USA and Thinking Dimensions Singapore and still works selectively with some of his clients. He is also co-author and co-designer of the KEPNERandFOURIE® methodologies.*



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING

*About the Advanced "AGILE" problem solving approach!*



*"The visibility provided by this approach is highly helpful with presenting findings and getting everybody on the same page early in the project process – extraordinary!"*

**- PM Local Investment Bank in New York, USA**

*"This approach is an easy way to systematically work through a problem with all stakeholders involved, even if they are contributing virtually."*

**- Portfolio Director for Local Insurance Company in Sydney**

*"This approach has had an extraordinary impact on the utilization of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). All we do now is identify the problem we would like to address and get our stakeholders to identify and nominate the best SME for the session. This approach resulted in fewer people attending meetings and having less meetings to arrive at a conclusion."*

**- VP Infrastructure Global Retail Bank**

*"All of a sudden we have a renewed dedication to solve problems and the only reason I can contribute to this is the fact that blame fixing & finger pointing has disappeared from our behavior"*

**PM - NSW Government Agency**

## IN-HOUSE OPTIONS



One of the more popular vehicles for assessing the tangible benefits of the KEPNERandFOURIE® DESIGN4™ THINKING™ approach is to deliver on- site training and on-the-job coaching. Conducting a workshop in-house gives you the opportunity for maximum customization and immediate return on investment on one of your vexing and long outstanding problem situations. (ROI).

This approach addresses your unique challenges and provides for a more personal learning experience as more than 50% of the workshop is spent on your own company issues & challenges. Participants would address their own concerns at the workshop with facilitator feedback to improve performance even further. For more information on this, please contact [mat-thys@thinkingdimensions.com](mailto:mat-thys@thinkingdimensions.com).

## TOP 5 REASONS TO INVEST IN THIS WORKSHOP

1. Acquire a set of proven tools and templates to increase project staff confidence throughout.
2. Reduce number of meetings to arrive at the same or improved conclusion
3. Learn a practice that would have an exponential impact on sprints & scrums.
4. Have a significant positive impact on all Project Management metrics as well as the socialization levels and "uptake" by project staff.
5. Improve your successes using the Agile protocol by at least 100%

*KEPNERandFOURIE® Thinking Technologies traces its origins back to 1997. It was then that Dr. Chuck Kepner & Dr. Matt Fourie collaborated on the design and delivery of root cause analysis approaches for IT Professionals to some of the leading companies in the world. IT Houses that required – better, faster and more flexible techniques to improve up time performance.*

*For more information, please go to:*

<http://www.thinkingdimensions.com/itsci>