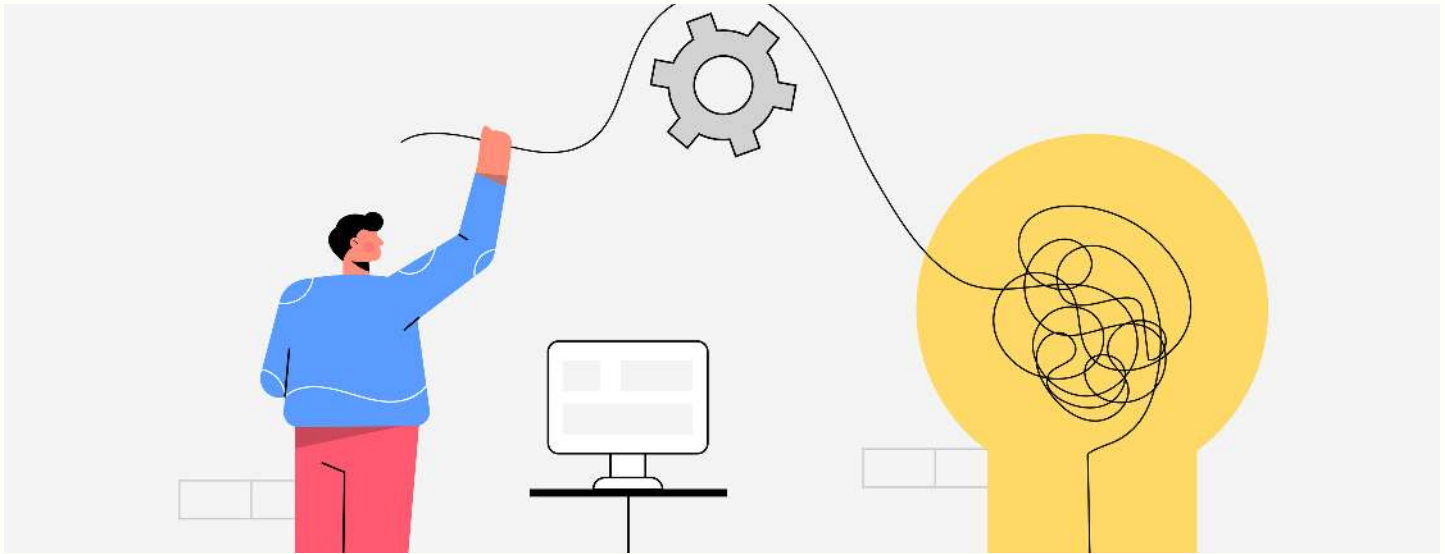




PROBLEM SOLVING



What is problem solving?

Problem-solving ability can be defined as the ability to identify a problem, take logical steps to find a desired solution, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of that solution. It is a cognitive, flexible and adaptive skill that indicates openness, curiosity and divergent thinking, based on accurate observation and recognition of the environment. We all spend much of our time solving problems, both at work and in our personal lives. Some problems are small and we can solve them quickly on our own. But others are complex challenges that require collaboration, creativity and considerable effort to solve. All problems have **two characteristics in common**: goals and barriers.

Goals.

Problems involve setting out to achieve some desired goal or situation. Goals can be anything you want to achieve, or where you want to be.

Barriers

If there were no barriers to achieving a goal, there would be no problem. Problem solving involves overcoming barriers or obstacles that prevent the immediate achievement of goals. But whatever problems we face, there are some common ways to tackle them effectively. And we can all increase our confidence and ability to succeed by building a strong set of problem-solving skills.

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MAIN FOCUS

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WHY IT IS IMPORTANT IN EDUCATION?

PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS

OTHER KEY SKILLS TO BE EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS

Why it is important in education?

Problem solving is one of the key skills among teachers in order to provide a better educational service. Teachers have also been confronted with new educational contexts in recent times accelerated by technological progress and situations provoked for example by the situation with Covid, these new contexts have put them in front of new challenges and problems that they have had to face and will have to face. In these convulsed scenarios, as a result of the continuous transformations that society and education are undergoing, the ability to solve problems is fundamental to be able to adapt to these scenarios and enable quality education.



Problem solving process

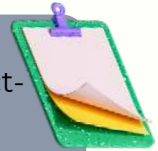
In general terms it can be said that the problem solving process is the way to solve a problem. The problem-solving process usually has the following stages

1 Problem Identification



This stage involves: detecting and recognising that there is a problem; identifying the nature of the problem; defining the problem.

2 Structuring the Problem



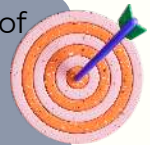
This stage involves: a period of observation, careful inspection, fact-finding and developing a clear picture of the problem

3 Looking for Possible Solutions



From the information gathered in the first two phases of the problem solving framework it is now time to start thinking about possible solutions to the identified problem

4 Making a decision



This stage involves careful analysis of the different possible courses of action and then selecting the best solution for implementation.

5 Implementation



This stage involves accepting and carrying out the chosen course of action. Implementation means acting on the chosen solution.

6 Monitoring



The last stage is about reviewing the outcomes of problem solving over a period of time, including seeking feedback as to the success of the outcomes of the chosen solution.



Other key skills to be effective problem solvers

To be effective in problem solving you are likely to need other key skills, including:



Creativity

More complex problems or problems that have not been experienced before are likely to require a more systematic and logical approach to solving them, and will require creative thinking



Teamwork

Many problems are best defined and solved with the input of others. Teamwork may seem like a "work thing", but it is just as important in school as it is in the workplace.



Risk management

Solving a problem involves some risk; this risk must be weighed against the possibility of not solving the problem.



Decision-making

Problem solving and decision making are closely related skills, and decision making is an important part of the problem solving process, as you will often be faced with several options and alternatives



Emotional intelligence

It is worth considering the impact that a problem and/or its solution has on you and others. Emotional intelligence, the ability to recognise your own and others' emotions, will help you find an appropriate solution