

Module 6: Problem solving

Facilitator's guide

Follow this guide to facilitate delivery of this module with young people.

It is suggested that students can work individually or in small groups. Ensure all students / groups have internet access to view video material where applicable. Student activities may be downloaded and completed on the PDF form or you may also wish to print the accompanying student resource pack.

Introduction (5 minutes)

Working through the introductory content (in student resource), students start to understand the importance of problem-solving in business. Students are introduced to the concept that problem-solving requires additional transferable skills such as teamworking, effective communication, adaptability, effective negotiation and creativity. Facilitating employers may wish to discuss some examples of where problem-solving skills are necessary within their business.

Activity 1 (10 minutes)

This activity is designed to engage students with some brain teaser type problems to solve. Facilitators may wish to substitute these puzzles with alternative activities where appropriate. The session could be extended if more complex tasks are set such as spaghetti and marshmallow towers, or paper bridge building.

Activity 2 (15 minutes)

This activity encourages students to start to consider characteristics that may be important when problem-solving whilst reflecting on their own strengths. Students will identify which side of their brain they feel is more dominant (left or right). They may also wish to complete the short [quiz](#) by MentalUP as part of this activity.

If students are working in groups, this activity ensures students consider the added value achieved from having a diverse team. You may wish to encourage students to refer to Module 4 (Teamwork), if they completed this as part of their overall experience, to better prepare for their workplace challenge (Module 8).

Activity 3 (45 – 60 minutes)

This activity introduces the IDEAL Problem-Solving Process (Bransford & Stein 1984), to encourage students to consider the key steps in problem-solving. Applying the IDEAL methodology and using the template provided, students will come up with solutions to the scenario. The [video](#) (⌚ 2 minutes watch) from the Institute of Chartered Accountants (England & Wales) (ICAEW) may help students understand the method in more detail.

Scenario

The number of young people accessing the local library and using the resources is very low compared to other age groups. In order to meet targets for the library which is at risk of closure, a solution to engage more young people must be found.

When applying the IDEAL process to their scenario, students may wish to watch the [video](#) from Ms Spensieri (⌚ 8 minutes watch) for more detail.

Facilitating employers may wish to incorporate their own problem-solving processes with students as part of this activity.

Facilitating educators may wish to incorporate strategies used in teaching such as Six Thinking Hats (Edward De Bono) which helps students move outside the habitual thinking style and look at things from different perspectives.

It is encouraged that students consider the use of the IDEAL process for problem-solving or an alternative provided by the facilitating employer/ educator, when working through their workplace challenge (Module 8).

Activity 4 (10 minutes)

Students are encouraged to watch the How to improve your problem-solving skills [video](#) from Success at School (⌚ 2 minutes watch) and consider how they demonstrate problem-solving skills in everyday school / college life.