PROBLEM SOLVING

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- Problem solving is a mental process that involves discovering, analyzing, and solving problems. The ultimate goal of problem-solving is to overcome obstacles and find a solution that best resolves the issue.
- The best strategy for solving a problem depends largely on the unique situation. In some cases, people are better off learning everything they can about the issue and then using factual knowledge to come up with a solution. In other instances, creativity and insight are the best options.

THE STEPS IN PROBLEM-SOLVING

- The following steps include developing strategies and organizing knowledge.
- **Identifying the Problem:** While it may seem like an obvious step, identifying the problem is not always as simple as it sounds. In some cases, people might mistakenly identify the wrong source of a problem, which will make attempts to solve it inefficient or even useless.
- **Defining the Problem:** After the problem has been identified, it is important to fully define the problem so that it can be solved.
- **Forming a Strategy:** The next step is to develop a strategy to solve the problem. The approach used will vary depending upon the situation and the individual's unique preferences.

- **Organizing Information:** Before coming up with a solution, we need to first organize the available information. What do we know about the problem? What do we *not* know? The more information that is available, the better prepared we will be to come up with an accurate solution.
- **Allocating Resources:** Of course, we don't always have unlimited money, time, and other resources to solve a problem. Before you begin to solve a problem, you need to determine how high priority it is. If it is an important problem, it is probably worth allocating more resources to solving it. If, however, it is a fairly unimportant problem, then you do not want to spend too much of your available resources into coming up with a solution.

- **Monitoring Progress:** Effective problem-solvers tend to monitor their progress as they work towards a solution. If they are not making good progress toward reaching their goal, they will reevaluate their approach or look for new Strategies.
- **Evaluating the Results:** After a solution has been reached, it is important to evaluate the results to determine if it is the best possible solution to the problem. This evaluation might be immediate, such as checking the results of a math problem to ensure the answer is correct, or it can be delayed, such as evaluating the success of a therapy program after several months of treatment.

Thank you