

Problem-Solving Strategy

This problem-solving strategy is useful when there is an area of disagreement or a complicated problem whose solution requires several family members. It is the kind of strategy used by business “think tanks” to generate creative solutions. This strategy can help your family find solutions, too!

- Have one person state the problem needing to be solved, and then ask each family member to share his or her view of it until everyone agrees on a single statement of the problem. Somebody should write down the problem statement that is agreed upon on a piece of paper, chalkboard, or the computer so that everyone can see it.
- Have each family member say how he or she feels about the problem without being interrupted.
- Have each family member contribute to a list of potential solutions without passing judgment on the feasibility of the suggestions. Be sure to include suggestions that seem outrageous, as these help with creativity.
- Have each family member contribute to editing the list to eliminate impossible solutions.
- Combine the remaining solutions into a written plan with assignments for each family member, as needed. The assignments should be specific, and it should be possible for family members to tell whether assignments have been completed.
- Set a time to review the results as a family, usually in 2 to 3 weeks.
- Revise the plan according to which parts of it helped solve the problem and which did not.
- Repeat the process as needed.



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