

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86976-8 - Problem-Solving in Organizations: A Methodological Handbook for Business Students

Joan Ernst van Aken, Hans Berends and Hans van der Bij

[Table of Contents](#)[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>List of boxes</i>	x
<i>Preface</i>	xi

Part I Fundamentals 1

1	Scope and nature of this handbook	3
1.1	Objectives and target audience	3
1.2	Design-focused and theory-based business problem-solving	4
1.3	How to use this handbook	5
2	Problem-solving projects in organizations	7
2.1	The nature of business problem-solving projects	7
2.2	The basic setup of a problem-solving project	12
2.3	Quality criteria for problem-solving projects	15
3	Design-focused business problem-solving	17
3.1	Introduction	17
3.2	Characteristics of design-focused business problem-solving	17
3.3	Problem-solving strategies	19
3.4	Choosing a problem-solving strategy	21
3.5	Designs and designing	22
3.6	Designing social systems	27
3.7	Paradigmatic starting points	30
4	Theory-based business problem-solving	33
4.1	Theory-based problem analysis and solution design	33
4.2	Solution concepts for business problem-solving	34
4.3	Developing knowledge for business problem-solving	36

Part II The problem-solving project 39

5	Intake and orientation	41
5.1	General setup	41
5.2	The intake process	42
5.3	The orientation process	45
5.4	Describing the problem context	46
5.5	Problem definition	46
5.6	Assignment and deliverables	50
5.7	Project approach	51
5.8	Project costs and organization	55
5.9	Problem-solving projects in different formats	56
5.10	Example	58
6	Theory-based diagnosis of business problems	63
6.1	Introduction	63
6.2	Empirical exploration and validation of the business problem and its causes	64
6.3	Theoretical analysis	70
6.4	Process-oriented analysis	75
6.5	The diagnostic story	78
6.6	Alternative approaches	79
6.7	Final remarks	81
7	Solution design	83
7.1	Introduction	83
7.2	The deliverables of the problem-solving project	83
7.3	The design process	84
7.4	Solution design	87
7.5	Solution justification	90
7.6	Solution design: the International Imaging Systems case	92
8	Change plan design and the actual change process	98
8.1	The timing of change plan design	98
8.2	Change plan design	99
8.3	The change process	104

vii

Contents

8.4	Change plan design: the International Imaging Systems case	106
8.5	Change plan design: the importance of developing organizational support	110
9	Evaluation, reflection and termination	113
9.1	Introduction	113
9.2	Project-oriented evaluation	114
9.3	Learning for the future	119
9.4	Scientific reflection	122
9.5	Personal and professional development	124
9.6	Project termination and reporting	125

Part III On methods 127

10	Qualitative research methods	129
10.1	Qualitative versus quantitative	129
10.2	Unit of analysis	130
10.3	Case selection	133
10.4	Qualitative data collection methods	134
10.5	Qualitative methods of analysis	137
10.6	Selecting a method	141
11	Searching and using scholarly literature	143
11.1	Introduction	143
11.2	Types of publications	144
11.3	Focusing a literature review	148
11.4	Searching literature	149
11.5	Integrating ideas and findings	152
12	Quality criteria for research	155
12.1	Introduction	155
12.2	Controllability	157
12.3	Reliability	158
12.4	Validity	163
12.5	Recognition of results	166
12.6	Concluding remarks	167

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86976-8 - Problem-Solving in Organizations: A Methodological Handbook for Business Students

Joan Ernst van Aken, Hans Berends and Hans van der Bij

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

viii

Contents

Part IV Conclusion 169

13 Concluding remarks 171

References 174

Index 181