

The Art of Problem Solving for Leaders and Executives

Main Trainer : Dr L. Michael Hall

Dates : 17,18, 20, 21 July 2026 from 9am to 6pm (30 hours)

Venue : Ravenala Attitude Hotel, Balaclava

Learning Objectives : Leaders and Executives spend most of their times trying to solve problems but their solutions may be missing an essential part, which is that problems are very often not out there but originate in the meta-place of the mind.

At the end of this training, participants will

- 1 – Distinguish between their roles as Manager and Problem Solver
- 2 - Define the real problem and craft a Well-Formed Problem Statement
- 3- Identify the different types of conversations
- 4 – Use WFO and Meta-questions to distill the problem as a single sentence
- 5 – Use Meta-Model to identify cognitive distortions and biases that may be masking the hidden meanings
- 6 – With the use of Meta-questions, navigate through the Meta-Place of the person's mind
- 7- Develop the Critical and Torpedo questions that will go to the heart of things
- 8 – Use the 7 problem-solving questions to become a Well-Trained Problem Solver

COURSE CONTENTS

Item	Description
	Day 1 - The Well-Formed Problem Experience
The 5-min conversation	Required skills : Rapport, Acknowledgements, Clarity, Challenge Exercise 1 – Matching physical, verbal state, Matching values and goals
Entering the person's state	Heart of Experience, State Induction Exercise 2 – Induce state of curiosity, learning and openness
Manager vs Coach	Distinction between roles Exercise 3 – Questionnaire to distinguish between the 2 roles
Formulating the problem	Defining the problem Attitude needed Real vs Pseudo problems A Well-Formed Problem Conversation Exercise 4 – Focused conversation asking about problem or challenge A Well-Crafted Problem Statement Exercise 5 – Practice the Well-Formed problem pattern

	Day 2 - The Different Kinds of Conversations
Kinds of conversations	The 14 most basic conversations Exercise 6 – Identifying the type of conversation you are having Dealing with the “noise” Exercise 7 – Ground the problem. Ask how is it a problem
Questioning to cut through	Different kinds and levels of questions WFO Questions Exercise 8 – Using WFO questions as a checklist Meta-Questions Exercise 9 – Explore with Meta-Questions the experience of something the other person is passionate about
Exploring a Problem pattern	Thinking skills for questioning Inferential thinking / listening Exercise 10 – Exploring a problem pattern Exercise 11 – Distill the problem as a sentence or as a single question
	Day 3 - The Language of Problem-Solving
The Language window	Meaning-Performance axis A Self-Actualized Manager Formulating and reporting the problem Exercise 11 – Identify the words and phrases that are cues to entering the person’s meanings
The Mirroring Skills	Giving and Receiving Feedback Exercise 12 – Practising Giving Sensory-based Feedback
Precision Questioning	The Meta-Model Distinctions & Questions Exercise 13 – Practising Meta Model
Detecting Uncritical thinking	Cognitive Distortions and Biases Exercise 14 – Identify cognitive distortions and biases
	Day 4 – Thinking as a Well-Trained Problem Solver
The Thinking behind the Conversation	The Meta-programs thinking patterns Exercise 15 – Given the thinking patterns identified, what meanings seem to be at the heart of the problem ? The Meta place : landmarks of the mind Meta Place questions Exercise 16 – Navigating through the landmarks of the mind using Meta Place questions
Critical Question	The critical question that could address the hidden meaning Developing your Critical question Exercise 17 - Invent a critical question and test it
Torpedo Question	Torpedo : A question that cut through the distractions and noise and goes to the heart of things Developing your Torpedo question Exercise 18 – Transform your critical question into a Torpedo question – Test it
The 7 Problem-solving questions	List these 7 questions Exercise 19 – Use these 7 questions to summarize the process