

Interest-Based Problem Solving

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What is Interest-Based Problem Solving?

Interest-Based Problem Solving is an issue-resolution process that addresses individual and group differences in a problem-solving environment. Participants work together to solve a problem through the sharing of information, creativity, flexibility and open communication rather than taking adversarial positions.

Common barriers to Interest-Based Problem Solving include:

- lack of trust
- lack of information/training
- lack of support
- fear of something new
- underdeveloped work relationships

Benefits of Interest-Based Problem Solving include:

- Issues are resolved quickly and closest to the Stakeholders.
- Relationships are enhanced.
- Trust is built.
- Conflict, grievances, and member complaints are reduced.
- Meaningful and effective solutions are fostered through collaboration.
- A more constructive work environment results naturally.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Interest-Based Problem Solving

STEP 1: Define the Problem

STEP 2: Determine Interests

STEP 3: Develop Options

STEP 4: Select a Solution

Norms of Collaboration

- Promoting a Spirit of Inquiry
- Pausing
- Paraphrasing
- Probing
- Putting ideas on the table
- Paying attention to self and others
- Presuming positive intentions

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History teaches us that Men
behave wisely...once they have
exhausted all other alternatives.

---Abba Eban