Problem Solving & Decision Making

Find root causes, generate options and make sound decisions that stick.

DURATION	FORMAT	LEVEL
15 hours	Onsite, online or hybrid	Foundation

About this programme

Gives teams a structured toolkit for problems and decisions: defining problems and root causes, creative idea generation, decision-making styles and models, evaluating options, and implementing and reviewing the chosen solution.

Who it is for: Team members, team leads and managers

What your team will be able to do

- Define problems precisely and find root causes with 5 Whys and fishbone diagrams
- Generate options using lateral thinking and Six Thinking Hats
- Recognise decision styles and the biases that affect decisions
- Evaluate alternatives with cost-benefit and SWOT analysis
- Plan, monitor and improve the implementation of decisions

Before you start

- None
- Bring a real problem from your work to use in the exercises

Course outline

1. Foundations

- How problem solving and decision making connect
- Why these skills matter for individuals and organisations
- Simple versus complex problems

2. Identifying and analysing problems

- Defining the problem rather than the symptoms
- Root cause analysis: 5 Whys and fishbone diagrams
- Collecting and analysing data
- Working within constraints

3. Creative solution generation

- Overcoming mental blocks, assumptions and biases
- Brainstorming and idea generation
- Lateral thinking, Six Thinking Hats and Appreciative Inquiry
- Using diverse perspectives

4. Making decisions

- Rational, intuitive and analytical decision styles
- Biases, risk attitudes and other influences
- The seven-step decision-making model
- Ethics in decision making

5. Evaluating, implementing and reviewing

- Evaluating alternatives with cost-benefit and SWOT analysis
- Testing solutions and making the decision
- Overcoming resistance and building an implementation plan
- Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement
- Case studies and simulations

Sample schedule

2 days onsite, or 4 half-day sessions online. We fit days and session lengths to your team's calendar.

Day 1	8 h	Foundations; Identifying and analysing problems; Creative solution generation
Day 2	7 h	Making decisions; Evaluating, implementing and reviewing

Assessment and certification

How learning is checked

- A self-assessment before and after the programme
- Case work, role-plays and exercises with feedback from the trainer
- A personal action plan that each participant presents at the end

Certificate and exams

- Participants who complete the programme receive a Cognitive Networks AI certificate of completion.

Formats and cohort size

- Onsite: At your office or a venue you choose, in full days.
- Online, live: Instructor-led over video, usually in half-day sessions so people can keep up with work.
- Hybrid: Some days in a room together, the rest online. Useful when a team works across cities.

Cohort size: 15 to 30 people per trainer. Larger teams run as parallel cohorts on the same outline, so everyone learns the same thing.

Pricing: We quote per cohort, based on duration, format and number of cohorts. There is no per-seat price list: tell us your team and we send a proposal within one business day.

Bring this programme to your team

Request a proposal at cognitivenetworks.ai/contact?programme=problem-solving-decision-making

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