

# COMPLEX PROBLEMS, DIFFICULT DECISIONS, & INNOVATIVE IDEAS: Smart-Team™ Tools for the Working Team

*A 2-day, 14 PDU (1.4 CEU) instructor-led program*

**As you become more skilled at understanding the elements of problem solving**, you can minimize the disruptive effects of problems on your projects and lower your project's risk profile. Improved decision-making and idea generation can accelerate your project's progress and raise everyone's game. While many of us may apply these skills successfully as individuals, we often stumble when we try to apply them as a team. *Complex Problems, Difficult Decisions* provides you with Smart-Team™ tools to help you solve problems, make decisions, and generate ideas with your team. In two days, you'll master three major team tools, a way to deploy them, and a method to secure their results.

**This program shows you how to recognize both problems and decisions**, separate them from other issues and concerns, and handle them so they don't recur. You'll learn how to escape old team thinking with innovative idea generation. Because many decisions must be made under *uncertainty*, this program will show you *how* to frame the uncertainties, *when* to decide, *when* to gather additional data, and even the expected value of perfect information.

**Using sources** from Descartes' *Discourse on Method*, through G. Polya's *How to Solve It*, to the present-day work of Nobel Prize Laureates Khaneman and Tversky, the program combines sources in logic, psychology, business, and team dynamics to deliver practical tools for a busy project team. These newly acquired team tools can also be adapted to enrich the repertoire of busy individuals.

**During this program's highly interactive sessions**, you will workshop issues that you and your teammates are currently engaged with – effectively advancing your real work while learning. You will leave the program saying, "I can apply this to my work immediately!"

**Upon completion, you will be able to:**

- Recognize the difference between an issue and a problem;
- Know how 4 steps applied twice can solve a complex team performance problem;
- Understand how to get the project team solving problems both individually and collectively;
- Know how to get the project team generating innovative ideas;
- Work alone and with your team to make good decisions under certain and uncertain conditions;
- Recognize and guard against conceptual biases that can interfere with good decision-making of both individuals and groups.

# PROBLEMS, DECISIONS & IDEAS

## Who will benefit?

- Team members who need to solve problems and contribute to team decisions
- Team leaders who manage day-to-day team problem-solving, decision-making, and idea generation
- Project managers who must solve complex problems and make difficult decisions
- Program managers who must coordinate decisions across several projects at the same time
- Executives who need teams with better business, technical, and project problem solving as well as better team decisions and innovative thinking

## AGENDA

### *Day 1*

#### **Team Problem Solving and Idea Generation**

- How do we recognize situations that require our attention?
- How do we separate concerns into manageable components?
- What are the critical thinking tools for teams?
- What is a problem?
- What makes a strong deviation statement?
- How do we specify what is and is not?
- How do we develop, test, and verify possible causes?
- What constitutes a good solution?
- What is a problem to find?
- What is a problem to prove?
- How do we apply logic tools to problems to prove without getting bogged down?
- How do we engage the whole team in innovative idea generation?
- What is the role of risk analysis?

### *Day 2*

#### **Team Decision-Making**

- How do problem solving and decision-making interact?
- When do you use decision tables and when do you use decision trees?
- What are the 8 steps to making a decision with a decision table?
- How do you manage decision-making under uncertainty?
- How does the concept of desirabilities apply?
- How do you use models to test decision sensitivities?
- What is the expected value of perfect information? Imperfect information?
- How do you know you have sufficient information?
- What are your innate biases what must you do to guard against them?
- How do we deploy our tools for problem solving, decision-making, idea generation, and risk analysis?
- What should our next steps include?
- Which step should we take first?

#### **Every participant will receive:**

- A 150-page program notebook
- A recent book on decision making
- Special summary cards for:
  - Team Problem Solving
  - Individual Problem Solving
  - Team Idea Generation
  - Team Decision Making
  - Decisions Under Uncertainty
  - Situation Review and Risk Analysis