

THE ISSUES SOLVING TRACK™

Issues are problems, challenges, or obstacles, opportunities, and new ideas worth your attention. It's really anything—good or bad—that your team may need to resolve. With your **Issues List** complete and clear, start by prioritizing the one, two, and three most important Issues to tackle today. Then, follow this three-step **Issues Solving Track™**.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY

The stated problem is rarely the *real issue*.

- You have to dig down to find the *real issue*.
- Don't move forward until you clearly identify the *real issue*.
- Once you have identified the real issue, then move to discuss and stay laser focused on the real issue until it is solved (no tangents).

STEP 2: DISCUSS

Being completely “open and honest,” every member of the team shares his or her thoughts, ideas, concerns, and solutions regarding the *real issue*.

- Discuss and debate.
- Get it all on the table, but say it only once. Saying it more than once is politicking.
- When it's all on the table and things are getting redundant, it's time to solve.
- When the *real issue* is clear and you keep the greater good in mind, the solution is always simple. That doesn't mean easy, and sometimes it's very hard.

STEP 3: SOLVE

“Solve” means agreeing on a plan that will make the Issue go away forever. It's more important *that* you decide than *what* you decide... so decide!

- The solution must be stated by someone until you hear the sweet sound of agreement.
- Sometimes you will have to go back to the discussion step after the solution is stated because you haven't truly solved it.
- Once everyone agrees, or at least can live with the decision, the action step(s) must be clear, owned by someone, and put on the To-Do List (where they're confirmed as “To-Done” at next week's meeting).

On a healthy team, everyone will agree with the solution eight out of ten times. When they don't, the Integrator needs to make the final decision. Consensus management *does not work* and will put you out of business faster than anything. Not everyone will be pleased in these situations, but as long as they have been heard and the team is healthy, they can “disagree and commit” to support the decision. From there, there must be a united front moving forward.