

Structured problem solving

Step 1: What is the problem/goal?

Think about the problem/goal carefully, ask yourself questions. Then write down exactly what the problem/goal is.

Step 2: List all possible solutions

Put down all ideas, even bad ones. List the solutions *without evaluation* at this stage.

Step 3: Assess each possible solution

Quickly go down the list of possible solutions and assess the *main* advantages and disadvantages of each one.

Step 4: Choose the "best" or most practical solution

Choose the solution that can be carried out most easily to solve (or to begin to solve) the problem.

Step 5: Plan how to carry out the best solution

List the resources needed and the major pitfalls to overcome. Practise difficult steps, make notes of information needed.

Step 6: Review progress and be pleased with any progress

Focus on achievement first. Identify what has been achieved, then what still needs to be achieved. Go through steps 1 to 6 again in the light of what has been achieved or learned.