

Brainstorming is stimulating and satisfying. The satisfaction comes from finding good workable solutions to problems, and defining the problem upfront is a real aid

Start by is to writing your problem or the current state (Step a1). Don't worry too much about quality at this point - simply making a start is significant. I often work on the future state (Step b1) at the same time. Next, expand on your problem by asking the following questions:

who **does** it affect ; does not affect. / what does it effect; does not affect. / how does it effect; does not affect. / when is it a problem ; is not a problem. / where is it a problem; is not a problem.

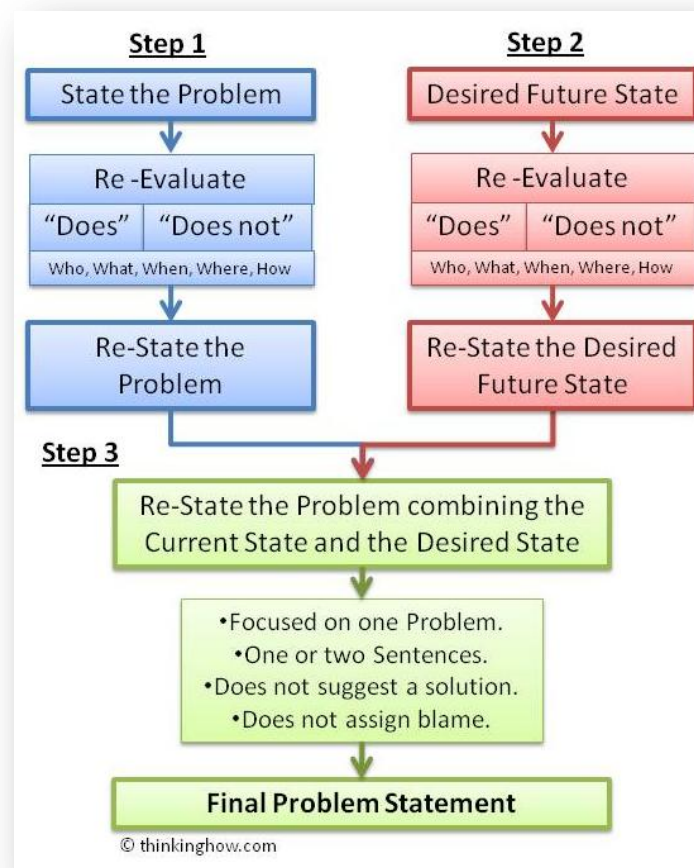
Now, re-write your problem statement based on those answers.

The Second step is the same as the first, but focuses on the Desired or Future State.

The Third Step is to combine your revised Problem or Current State and your desired Future State into a single statement. This might take a couple of attempts but stick with it. Finally, review your new problem statement against the following criteria:

- Focused on only one Problem.
- One or two sentences long.
- Does not suggest a Solution.

You should then have a concise and well balanced **Problem Statement** ready for a brainstorming session. It should be unambiguous and devoid of assumptions. It will enable you or your group to focus in on the problem and work toward solutions that truly fits.



Step

1a

Write down what you think the problem is.

Key words:

Step

1b

Look at your Problem & expand the following:

Who does the problem affect?

What happens?

When does the problem occur?

Where does the problem occur?

How does the problem occur?

Step Look at your Problem &
1c answer the following:

Who is not affected by the problem?

What doesn't happen?

When doesn't the problem occur?

Where does the problem not occur?

How

Step Re-State the problem
1d based on the answers in
 1b and 1c

Key words:

Step

2a

Write down the desired
or future state.

Key words:

Step Expand your future
2b state with the following.

Who does the future state affect?

What happens?

When does the future state occur?

Where does the future state occur?

How does the future state occur?

Step Look at the future state
2c & answer the following:

Who is not affected by the future?

What doesn't happen in the future?

When doesn't the future state occur?

Where does the future state not occur?

How

Step

2d

Re-State the Future
State based on the
answers in 2b and 2c

Key words:

Step **3a** Combine the revised
Problem Statement and
Future State

Key words:

step

3b

Review the new
problem statement

Does it address only one problem?

One or two sentences only?

Does not suggest a solution?

Does not attribute blame?

Step

3c

Final Problem Statement

Key words: