

54 Tools and Techniques *for* Business Excellence

“The best consultants don’t just give you what they have got, they give you what you need. In all the years I have known Mike I have found him incredibly resourceful in finding an approach that fitted the question we had as a business. Those resources are shared here in a no nonsense guide to getting things done in organisations.”

*Graham Higgins, Head of Learning & Development,
Cathay Pacific Airways*

Michael Wash



Reviewer's Comments

"This is an essential handbook for those involved in developing business excellence. It is an easily accessible resource for leaders, managers, and those involved in training and development. As a developer of coaches and mentors, I will certainly be using it myself, and I will be recommending it for the many and varied tools and techniques which can be used to enhance individual as well as organisational performance. There is a good blend of practical exercises which can be used in a range of situations. These are enriched with real case-studies from Mike Wash's extensive experience of leading business excellence in organisations across different cultures. It is clearly written and will be useful at every level in an organisation."

Dr Mary Connor, consultant in individual and organization development

"I like the simplicity and presentation of the material. Mike has managed to provide a succinct summary of each technique that is instantly useable to a 'newcomer' or that rekindles the memory spark for experienced practitioners."

Malcolm Hurrell, Vice President, Human Resources, AstraZeneca

"I like this book very much. It's practical, useful and written in a way that will help support managers to try something new. I think all managers and leaders would benefit from this book. It can be dipped into when required so that when you are confronted with an issue and in need of some creative spirit – you can find out not just 'what' but 'how' to go about dealing with it."

Christopher Philip Bunker, HR Director UK and Ireland, ABS Wastewater Technology Limited

"A good toolkit to get the job done better . . . taking a spanner instead of a hammer causes fewer damaged pipes; there are some excellent tools in Mike's bag and I particularly like the very simple ones that force me to use diagrams or make choices, so sharpen how I think about an issue."

David Baines, Regional Chairman, Vistage International (UK) Limited

"As someone who is regularly involved with managing and communicating change in large complex organisations, I have found Mike's tools and techniques to be invaluable. I use them everyday in my working and personal life and find they help me to achieve the things I want to achieve."

Suzanne Hughes, Regional Corporate Affairs Manager, Environment Agency – North West

"A good toolkit for managers and professional staff."

Jane Horan, Director, Organisational Development, The Walt Disney Company AP Ltd

"The book has an easy style which will encourage people to read, digest and use. It will have a particular appeal to the public sector."

Professor Tom McGuffog MBE

"It's a great idea to collect so many tools and techniques under one, easy to read book. I wish I had access to this book when I was starting out as a manager. Experienced managers will also find it useful as an aide-memoir."

Lawrence Jackson, Managing Director, Gentech International Limited

"Very readable and a good jogger on what we should know as managers, but readily forget. The case studies help by showing the application and bringing the different points together. Clear, useful and practical!"

Christopher Gibbs, Engineering Director, Cathay Pacific Airways

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54 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

Michael Wash

From the simplest 'generation of ideas' to the transformation of organisational culture, these tools and techniques are the essential basics – the 'must do' and the 'must know' of management and business excellence.



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Gloucestershire, GL7 6AD, UK
Tel: 0044 (0) 1285 771441
Fax: 0044 (0) 1285 771055
Email: info@mb2000.com
Web: www.mb2000.com

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To the Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust – Alder Hey and Cathay Pacific Airways. Two organisations who have successfully applied many of the techniques included here and pride themselves in being the best at what they do.

Acknowledgements

None of the approaches outlined in this book are original works. Over the last twenty years I have used, and adapted, these tools and techniques from many esteemed scholars, authors and gurus – too many to mention here.

I am indebted to the contributions they have made and I thank them for allowing practitioners, like myself, to test out their effectiveness.

However, there is one person whose work has influenced me significantly more than others. Thank you to Professor Gerard Egan whom I have, over the years, had the privilege to work with and put his Skilled Helper Model into practice, along with his model for Organisational Change and his helpful description of Shadowside Management.

These have been the basis of my consultancy practice and many of my clients today are usefully putting into practice approaches to improvement based on my interpretation of Professor Egan's models.

George Buchanan, a client and past Chief Executive of several Scottish Health Service Trusts who has encouraged and trusted me to support him in putting many of the Tools and Techniques into practice.

Tony Bell OBE, Chief Executive of Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital, whose constructive feedback and working relationship I have valued greatly over the years. His pioneering application of these approaches have resulted in real benefits in the health of patients.

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Graham Higgins, whose confidence in me has helped me enrich my career and work experience.

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Introduction

This book will provide you with easy to follow, practical advice which will enable you to improve your efficiency and effectiveness at work – i.e. improve quality and work smarter!

Every technique described here has been used either in my role as a teacher, facilitator, manager or consultant. I offer them to the reader in a simple, helpful format – because I know they work.

For each of the 54 techniques, you will find the following table:

T&T No:			
Title:			
For use by:			
When to use:			
Also see T&T No:			
Difficulty Rating:		Category:	

This table will provide you with instant information, letting you immediately see your options and focus for the technique you are about to apply.

T&T No: This is the number of the technique. Useful to use when cross referencing with other techniques.

Title: Immediate confirmation of the title of each technique.

For use by: This is to guide the reader as to who may benefit from using this technique.

When to use: Whether in meetings, in team workshops, or in difficult circumstances, this guides you to the best time to apply the particular technique.

Also see T&T no.: This will cross-reference other tools and techniques which can enhance or complement the use and performance of the particular technique.

Difficulty rating: This illustrates a difficulty rating. 1=straight forward, 2=quite easy, 3=moderately hard, 4=challenging, 5=very challenging. However, this rating is only given as a guide and, of course, the principles and guidance given will help reduce the degree of difficulty with practice.

Category: This gives an indication of the area of development that the particular technique relates to.

Once the technique is outlined, there is also provision of an example or illustration to show the best practice of the technique.

Symbols:

- [⚡] This symbol indicates **critical points** throughout each tool or technique.
- 👥 This symbol indicates **group work** requirement.
- ⚡ This symbol indicates a **priority action point**.
- 📅 This symbol indicates **note-taking or flipchart required**.
- 🚫 This symbol indicates a **potential risk or pitfall area**.
- DL This indicates that you have the facility to **download** certain questionnaires and exercises, available from www.54.mwauk.com.

Is This Book For You?

You may be a manager wondering if there is a better or smarter way of managing your team or progressing your projects.

You may be an MBA Student about to graduate and wondering how all this theory works in practice?

It could be that you have just been promoted into a supervisory position and are wondering – what next?

It might be that you have been a manager for some years now and wondering if you are getting a little complacent. Perhaps it's worth brushing up on a few techniques – who knows, there may be something new for you here.

If you are a manager or a professional who has a responsibility in the organisation to facilitate or encourage change – then this is your toolkit!

There are even significant approaches for the executive in senior positions who may have questions about either – can I change the culture of my organisation, or are my managers equipped with the right skills and approaching their job in the most efficient way?

Or, you may be someone in an organisation who just thinks 'there must be a better way to do this!'

How to Use This Book

In any management situation, whether it's a problem to be solved, project to be managed, team to motivate or an individual to coach, it's important – first of all – to assess what is actually going on – i.e. get the facts. (Some of these tools and techniques can help you do this – see section 'What's really going on?').

Management or more precisely – leadership – requires the manager to 'move the situation on' – i.e. manage either by enabling improvement or solving the problem. This requires giving an element of direction or helping others find their own direction. (Tool and Technique numbers 18 and 30 are examples of approaches that help clarify what it is you are trying to achieve).

Following clarity about the situation and the outcome you're looking to achieve, it is important that action plans are formulated (see T&T No 14 and 16). Within the above process (described in more detail in T&T No 20 – Problem Management/Solving) there are many approaches to help the individual or organisation become more excellent at what they do.

This book offers you assistance, not in providing you with solutions, but providing you with methods to find the best way forward for you, your team and your organisation.

So, if you have a focus, area of interest or question – for example, how can I manage my meetings more effectively, how can I be more efficient, how can I improve my presentation skills, how can I delegate more effectively or how can I change my organisation? – then exploring the relevant techniques related to these questions, and more importantly putting them into practice will assist you in your personal quest to become a more effective manager and leader.

'DL' (Download) is indicated on some of the exercises and techniques. This gives you the facility of downloading a specific questionnaire or exercise as part of the technique described, for your own use or to use with your team.

T&T No:	1		
Title:	CAUSE AND EFFECT ANALYSIS		
For use by:	Anyone involved in problem-solving or improvement projects.		
When to use:	Getting to the root cause of problems.		
Also see T&T No:	8, 13, 24, 40		
Difficulty Rating:	2	Category:	(A) Find out 'What's really going on?'

Cause and Effect Analysis

What is it?

Cause and effect analysis is a technique which may be used in improvement projects to identify how different possible causes affect a given problem. Sometimes referred to as the 'Ishikawa' or the 'Fish Bone' diagram.

Why use it?

- To help generate ideas and record them.
- To reveal hidden relationships and highlight important relationships.
- To investigate root causes.

When might it be used in projects?

- Cause and effect analysis is an invaluable aid to project management.
- It is a useful aid to problem management in general.
- It is a useful means to getting a quality improvement group working together in its early history.

Benefits of using cause and effect analysis

- As well as identifying individual causes to problems, groups of causes can be located that are not immediately obvious.

- Use of the technique in a group enables everyone to contribute. In this way, the widest range of expertise can be drawn on.

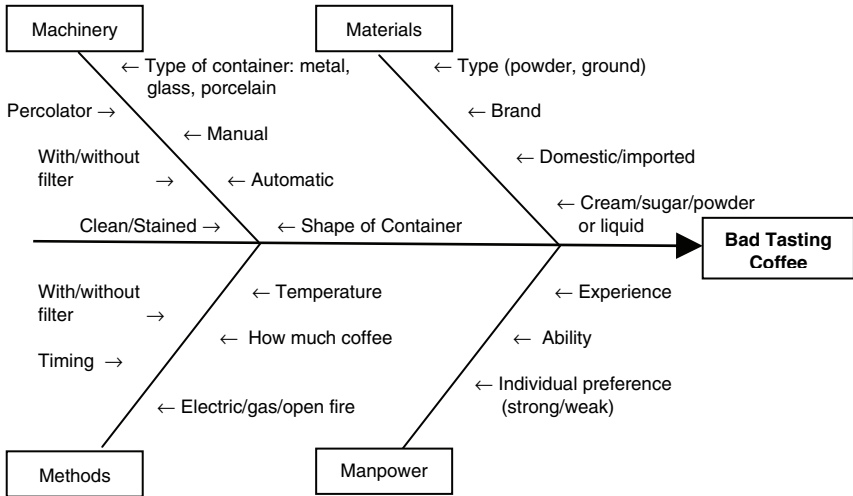
Developing the cause and effect diagram

1. Establish the effect/problem to be investigated.
2. ☐ On the flipchart or paper draw a box with the effect/problem statement in it.
3. Draw a line extending from the left of the box and identify the main categories of causes (e.g. Manpower, Machinery, Methods, Materials, or develop categories that suit your business).
4. Draw lines extending from the one attached to the box, one for each category.
5. Brainstorm (see T&T No 40) for sub-causes in each category and attach them to the appropriate line. (This can be done using post-its. Move them as the group considers where the causes should lie.)
7. Once the causes are located, lines expressing relationships between the causes can be added, usually in a different colour.

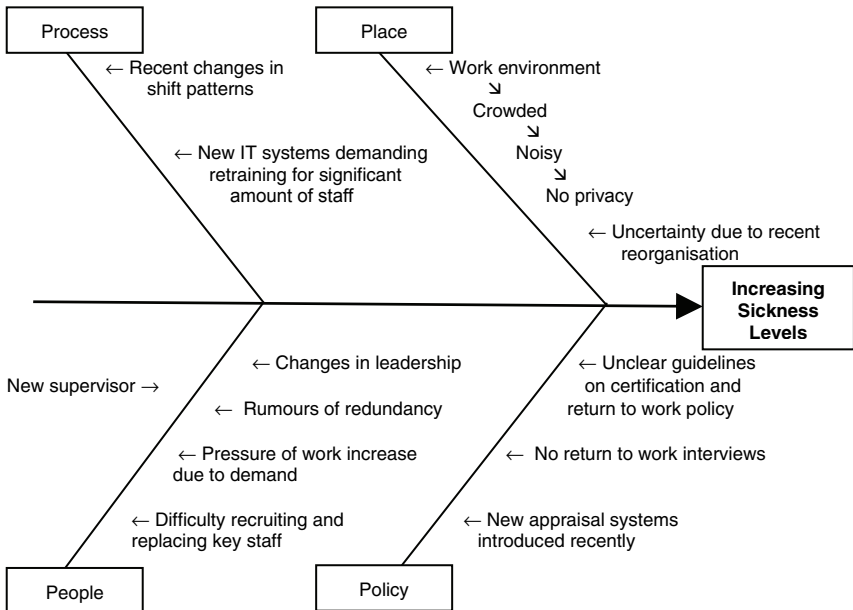
🚧 Ground rules for success

- Use large diagrams.
- Ensure everyone's participation.
- Examine relationships between causes.
- Do not overload the diagram:
 - isolate dominant causes.
 - be sure you have defined the problem.
- Do not look for someone to blame.
- Follow brainstorming rules.

Example 1



Example 2



Next step options

It is then possible to ‘Pareto’ each section (see T&T No 13) and analyse further the item causing most of the effect.

‘Why, why, why?’ (see T&T No 8) can be a useful way of finding out what’s really going on at this stage.

Case study: Cause and Effect

An electrical goods distributor was having a significant increase in goods returned due to inaccurate orders being filled and delivered. This was the responsibility of the order requisition team and the warehouse picking teams.

Representatives from all departments, including sales and order processing, and the warehouse staff were brought together and were helped to construct a cause and effect diagram.

The effect of increased numbers of returns was caused by many different factors, including:-

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– equipment boxes not clearly labelled.– shelves too low or too high.– box stacking unstable, some spillage, etc. |
| Manpower | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– shift system resented, resulting in poor motivation.– lack of measures of productivity.– lack of cooperation between departments.– poor supervision. |
| Machinery | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– warehouse belt breakdown. |
| Money | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– poor incentive scheme. |

This exercise resulted in a number of shop floor changes which were owned and followed through by the staff themselves, resulting in an 80% reduction in order errors.

T&T No:	2		
Title:	CONFLICT MANAGEMENT		
For use by:	Team Leader, Manager		
When to use:	When communication or relationship breakdown is evident or at risk		
Also see T&T No:	12, 34		
Difficulty Rating:	5	Category:	(A) Find out 'What's really going on?'

Conflict Management

CUDSA is a systematic approach to dealing with conflict situations. It is easy to remember, and gives you support in what may be a heated, emotional situation. It is aimed at achieving a 'win-win', positive outcome to conflict. It offers an alternative to escalating resentments and feuds, and enables a rational approach to difficult situations to develop.

If CUDSA is to have maximum effect, you will need to remember to be assertive, non-defensive and non-aggressive in your communication. It is best to leave the physical area where the initial conflict has taken place, to sit down in a neutral area, taking the process as slowly as necessary to gain a 'win-win' outcome. If you are intervening to apply CUDSA in a dispute between two others, calmly assert your authority, and confront any tendency for the dispute to escalate.

CUDSA =


- Confront the conflict.
- Understand each other's position.
- Define the problems.
- Search for and evaluate alternatives.
- Agree on and implement best solution(s).


Step 1

- Confront the conflict.
 - 🛑 Stop the conflict.
 - Indicate your desire to resolve the conflict.
 - 🔄 Identify defensive routines*.

* These are behaviours we engage in to protect our position, to rationalise or make excuses for how things are

- Enlist the cooperation of the other party (or parties) to stop the conflict.
 - Move to a quiet, private area, if at all possible.
 - If this is not an immediate possibility, identify a time and place to meet and sort things out.
- Step 2 Understand each other's position.
- Use responding and questioning skills.
 - Check understanding regularly.
 - Be tentative.
 - ❗ Make no judgements, and do not allow others to berate each other – defuse anger.
 - Make sure all parties understand the respective points. Ask them to summarise if necessary.
 - Set a reasonable time limit on the discussion.
 - Keep reminding yourself you want a positive outcome for all.
 - If one person is tending to over-react, postpone things, and talk to them individually.
- Step 3 Define the problems.
- Summarise the points from both sides.
 - Allow each person to modify the summaries as required.
 - Make regular checks for agreement on the summaries.
 - Control unfair or intimidating behaviour or remarks.
- Step 4 Search for and evaluate alternatives.
- Be explicit that both needs can not be met.
 - Encourage/reinforce any attempts to solve the problem.
 - Make suggestions, not recommendations, when possible.
 - Allow suggestions to be modified.
 - Encourage trade-off/negotiation. (See T&T No 12.)
 - Make sure the final outcome is acceptable to both parties.

- Step 5 Agree on and implement best solution(s).
- View agreement as a contract to be upheld. (See T&T No 34.)
 -  Consider what needs to happen for the solution to be implemented.
 - Discuss the mutual benefits of new solution.
 - Reinforce/praise the parties involved.
 - Offer realistic support to the parties if possible.
 - Detail the appropriate plans needed to put new solution into practice.

 Working through a 'conflict situation' invariably throws up many powerful emotions. In reality, these processes are many and complex. It may require offering individual support to help diffuse and understand the emotions before moving on. Skilful facilitation and effective interpersonal skills on all sides at each stage are important, if a long lasting agreement and/or a way forward is to be achieved.

Case study: Conflict Management

High sickness rate, patient complaints, delays in admission and discharge and a formal complaint about bullying – these were the presenting symptoms from one particular department in a large hospital. The department was a day patient ward, where quick and caring throughput of morning and afternoon list patients were crucial. This was a very unhappy working environment.

I interviewed most of the staff. The main problems were down to two shift leaders (charge nurses) fighting over control of staff rota and one accusing the other of being unfair. This was complicated by a number of staff recently returning from maternity leave insisting on certain days off – which resulted in a perception of unfairness from the other staff.

The first stage in solving this was to get the two managers responsible to accept that there was a problem and that they were part of it. Bringing them together and exploring differences and the impact they were having on the working environment was a difficult but worthwhile conversation.

This resulted in a commitment to have a ½ day time out with all the staff where a renewed vision of how best to work together took place.

Compromise and a reiteration of values were key elements. Significant improvement was evident through a noticeable difference in the ward atmosphere – i.e. more smiles, more cooperation, and more initiative to improve and to be flexible.