

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Diagnostics



Root cause analysis

What you assume to be the cause of a problem or issue may not always be the case. That's why it's important to do a root cause analysis (RCA), so you can identify and understand the true (or root) cause/s of the problem or issues and implement the right solution.

Diagnostics

The purpose of this phase is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current state from different perspectives. Once you know the issues you can prioritise them and establish the root causes, so you develop the right solutions.

Key points

1. Engage stakeholders

RCA works best when conducted with people representing areas and roles within your organisation who are affected by your project. These people may each provide a different perspective which you hadn't considered. Only if the problem or issue is small and doesn't impact many stakeholders, you may be able to conduct the RCA alone. In this case, it's best to validate your findings with other relevant stakeholders.

2. Discuss key issues

Ensure your stakeholders are aware of the key issues you found in the diagnostics phase, including the supporting qualitative and quantitative data and process you followed to identify the key issues.

3. Ask why

The 'Five Whys' requires you to ask why an issue is occurring and drill down to the potential root cause. Each time an answer is given, ask 'Why?' again, up to five times. As you dig deeper, you'll find the answers become more thought-provoking and useful.

4. Record results

The 'Why-Because' diagram can be a useful tool to record the causes of issues as you go, particularly if there are multiple causes. You can then drill down into each cause until that particular path is exhausted. The Ishikawa or fishbone diagram is another useful way of plotting the causes of the issues when there are multiple causes.

Considerations and tips

To discover the root cause of any issue, be sure to be positive, encouraging, empathetic and aware of any personal biases (including your own). Be willing to be objective when you validate the causes.

Prepare your team

Be clear on what the session is trying to achieve. Have a plan on how to address any disagreements or lack of understanding as soon as they arise. Listen to others, ask questions and encourage equal participation.

Gather ideas

To complete a successful RCA, consider a brainstorming session. It is important to get your key stakeholders involved, as their input is vital to uncovering the root cause.

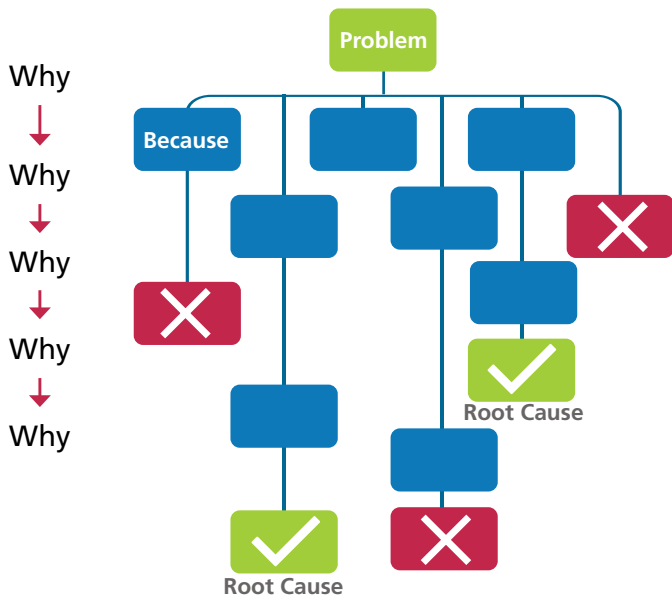
Investigate further

Consider what further investigation you will need to validate your root causes. There may be a need for further diagnostics around the root causes you and your team uncover.

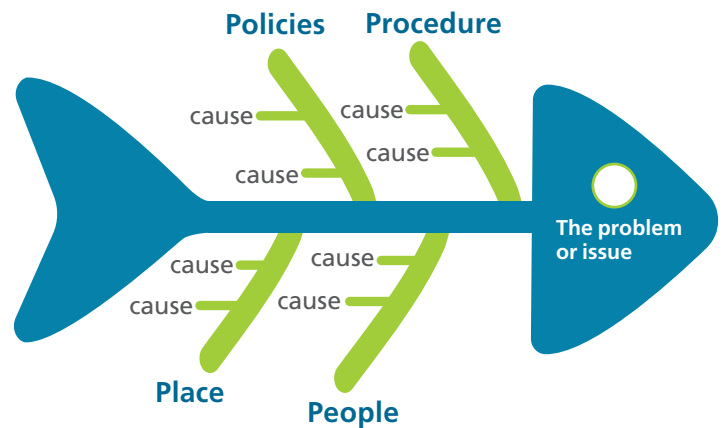
Look for multiple root causes

You will often find you discover multiple root causes and it may not be possible to address them all. Be clear with your stakeholders that the plan will be to prioritise and target the key root causes.

The 'Why, Because' diagram



The Ishikawa or fishbone diagram



Further information

[My Health Learning Log in Form](#) – Redesign Diagnostics (202464432): Root Cause Analysis

Next steps

Next you need to think about prioritising your key root cause issues by determining how much weight each has on your project. Utilise a prioritisation matrix to determine the impact or influence each has on the patient or project outcomes.