

Chapter 6: Problem Solving

Objectives

- Solving problems through time management.
- Solving problems through possibility thinking.
- Nipping small problems before they grow.
- Making backup plans.
- Finding people to discuss problems with.

Working Vocabulary

- **Manage:** Managing something means having control.
- **Conflict:** A conflict is a disagreement with a person or a situation.
- **Anticipate:** If you anticipate, you look ahead.

For Discussion

Employers say problem solving seems difficult for people who have not worked or who are re-entering the work world. Many problems that arise are simply personal issues you have not worked out.

For example, suppose your car won't start, your baby-sitter is sick, or your driver's license has expired. What do you do? A job requires a commitment of 35 to 40 hours per week, 50 weeks a year. You cannot just stay home or leave work when you want to. You must have a way to deal with expected and unexpected problems so that they do not affect your job survival.

Every person has problems both big and small. Most problems will pass in time, although they seem endless when we're going through them. Remembering that you are either part of the problem or part of the solution is helpful. Some people have a difficult time being part of the solution. They prefer being part of the problem (doing nothing).

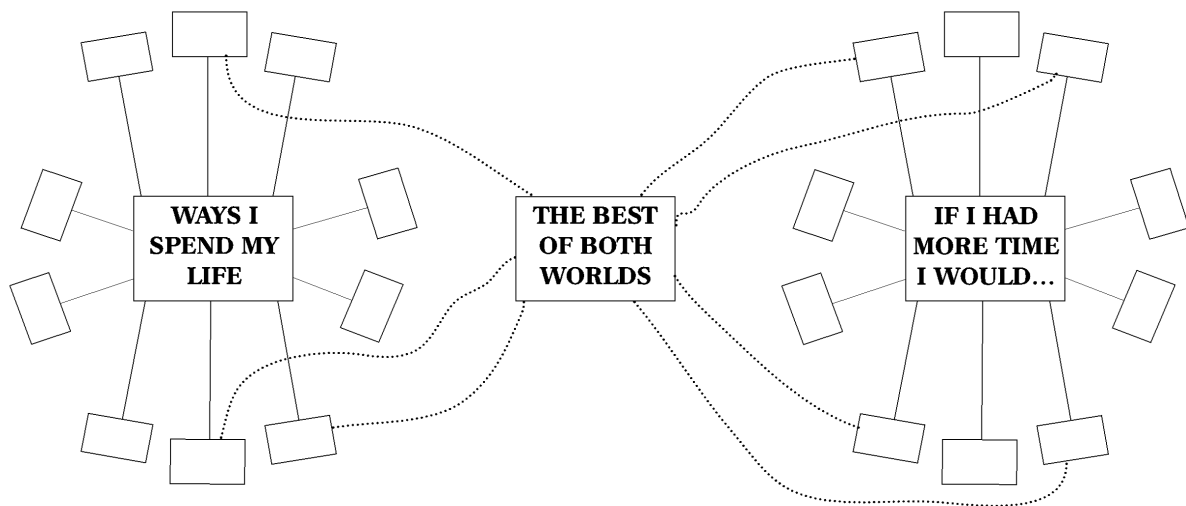
Presentation Suggestions

Use with Pages 94–99

Begin by introducing the vocabulary words. They are repeated frequently throughout the chapter. Then review the objectives. Ask the class to draw conclusions about how the words relate to the objectives.

Use the definition of *manage* to discuss the idea of time management. What does it mean to the students? Have them read the top of page 94 and complete the Stop and Think on pages 94–95 individually.

Ask students, “Have you ever felt that you would be fine if there were just a few more hours in the day?” and “Have you asked yourself why you never get everything finished but others seem to manage?” Explain that the first step is to decide the best way to spend the time you have. Conduct a whole group discussion about uses of time. Draw the following diagram on the board or overhead and ask students to fill in the boxes.



Draw connection lines between “Ways I spend my time” and “If I had more time I would...” Ask students to complete the Stop and Think exercises on pages 96–97. You can also use the “**Time Flies**” activity.

Invite a student to read aloud the Example on page 98. Review the diagram on the board or overhead and the Stop and Think on page 96 in the workbook. Then have students complete the Stop and Think on pages 98–99 individually.

Use with Pages 100–102

Direct student attention to “Method 2: Use Possibility Thinking” on page 100. Have someone read the Example on page 100. Ask the class if anyone thought about the “Until Next Time” from Chapter 5. Reread the “Until Next Time” to refresh their memories, and then discuss as a whole group.

Ask students to name ways their home life affects their work. List these examples on the board or overhead. Then ask a student to read the bottom of page 101 aloud. Next, go through the list on the board or overhead and decide whether each is a prioritizing problem, time management problem, or communication problem. (Use abbreviations P, TM, and C.)

Ask the class to read the Example silently on page 102 and complete the Stop and Think on page 102 individually. Call on students randomly to listen to responses. If you have time, use the activity **“You Can Do This!”**.

Use with Pages 103–107

Move on to “Method 3: Solve Small Problems Before They Grow” on page 103. Have a student read the top of page 103.

Write “SOLVING PROBLEMS” at the top of the board or overhead. Then list the three methods as follows:

- Method 1: Time Management
- Method 2: Possibility Thinking
- Method 3: Solve Small Problems

As you write them, review the theory behind each method.

Ask the class for examples from real life of how small problems grow into large ones. Allow time for discussion. Be sure to ask students whether these are home or work problems. Encourage students to use these examples to begin the Stop and Think on pages 103–104.

Now, ask for a student to describe Method 1 and give an example of how it works. Continue in the same way with Methods 2 and 3. Introduce the section “Method 4: Make a Backup Plan.” Ask a student for his or her definition of a backup plan. Write it on the board or overhead. Complete the Stop and Think on page 105 together as a class. Discuss.

The section on “Method 5: Talk About Your Problems” is more personal for students. Explain that it is always a good idea to have someone to discuss their problems with. That way, frustrations will not be bottled up until they explode.

Be sure to emphasize that work is work and home is home. So everyone should have someone to talk about home problems with and someone else to talk about work problems with. Provide each student with an index card on which to write the following:

REMEMBER
INSIDE PROBLEMS—KEPT INSIDE!
OUTSIDE PROBLEMS—KEPT OUTSIDE!

Have students complete the Stop and Think exercises on pages 106–107 individually.

Until Next Time

Do you currently have any habits that could be a problem in the workplace? What would you do if a co-worker had an annoying habit that constantly bothered you at work? Think about it until next time.