Quick Tips to Facilitating the Problem Solving Process

**Step 0: Building the Foundation for Collaboration:**

- **Part 1: Introduction (3-5 minutes):**
  - The Facilitator will provide a brief overview of the 4 steps of the problem solving process (Problem ID, Problem Analysis, Intervention Development, Response to Intervention).
  - The Facilitator will describe his/her role (prompting discussion, moving the team through the process, enforcing ground rules, etc.).
  - The Facilitator should ask for a Timekeeper who will keep time for each of the steps and let the team know when the time is up. The Facilitator will determine or ask the group if more time is needed for a given step.
  - The Facilitator may ask for a member of the team to be the Recorder. The Facilitator (or Recorder) will keep track of the discussion on chart paper, etc.
  - The Facilitator will ask if there are any questions.

- **Part 2: Ground Rules (2 minutes):**
  - The Facilitator will also assist the team in identifying a few ground rules (Group Norms) to help the process work better.
    - For example: Stay on Topic, Wait Your Turn, Avoid Side Conversations, Use Technology at Appropriate Times, Don’t Criticize Ideas During Brainstorming, Participation by all Stakeholders is Encouraged, etc.

- **Part 3: Data, surveys, etc. (3-5 minutes):**
  - As the Facilitator, have all data graphs, data tables, surveys, etc. ready for participants to review. Try to keep the data simple and easily interpretable.
  - If needed, develop guiding questions to help facilitate the participants through the analysis of the data.

**Step 1: Problem Identification: Present the Problem/Goal (3-5 minutes)**

*Guiding Questions: Based upon the data presented in Step 0, what is the problem? Where is the problem occurring? When is the problem occurring? Are there trends in the data?*

- Ask one person to provide a brief description to illustrate the problem.
- Ask any other team members to clarify the problem, if necessary.
- Identify the problem or goal in concrete, descriptive, behavior terms (precision statement) and get consensus from the team.

**Step 2: Problem Analysis: (10 minutes): Why is the problem occurring?**

- **Part A of Problem Analysis**
  - *Brainstorm Resources (5 minutes):* Based upon the identified problem, think about the resources available at the school or district to address the problem (people, time, things, materials, professional development, coaching, relationships, programs, etc.)?
    - Provide group members with a minute to individually jot down ideas on paper and advise them to prioritize their top ideas in case time runs out.
    - Have team members share their resources.
      - As a Facilitator, you can decide if you want to use a round robin format, open format, etc.
    - During this process, do not let the group criticize or evaluate brainstorm ideas.
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- Review the list and ask, “Does anyone have any questions?”

**Brainstorm Barriers (5 minutes):** Based upon the problem, what barriers must be eliminated so we can address the problem?
- Provide group members with a minute to individually jot down ideas on paper and advise them to prioritize their top ideas in case time runs out.
- Have team members share potential barriers to addressing the problem.
  - As a Facilitator, you can decide if you want to use a round robin format, open format, etc.
- The group identifies the top barriers to address.
  - As the Facilitator, remind the group to address barriers they have control over, are relevant and changeable.
- The Facilitator will group barriers by theme or commonality.
- The Facilitator will summarize the barriers and then develop consensus with the group on one or two barriers to be eliminated.

**Part B of Problem Analysis**
- Clearly identify the barrier(s) the team determined to be eliminated or reduced.
- Discuss and record reasons “why” the barrier(s) exists. Have the group consider curriculum, instruction, school/district environment, professional development, practices, processes, etc.)
  - If participants develop a hypothesis that is unalterable such as, “the problem is occurring because students don’t have computers at home.” Ask the group, “if we provided all students with computers then they would complete their homework.”

**Part C of Problem Analysis**
- Based upon the barriers and hypothesis generated in Part B, have the group brainstorm strategies for eliminating the identified barrier.
  - Frequently ask, “will this address the problem identified?”
  - This is the time for clarification.
  - This section should help link into the intervention plan

**Step 3: Intervention/Action Plan**
- Based upon the strategies from Part C, develop:
  - Action Steps or Tasks (make sure these address the identified problem)
  - Who will be responsible for the action steps?
  - Identify if any materials, resources, etc. are needed
  - Determine when the task needs to be completed?
  - Follow-up is needed if the task will be used in the future (i.e., staff survey, professional development, etc.)
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Step 4: Evaluation of Progress/RTI

Guiding Questions: How will progress towards the goal/plan be monitored and evaluated? Is the plan working?

- Determine the steps for evaluation (i.e., TIC, BoQ, Walk-through, ODR data)
- Who will collect the data and progress monitor the plan?
- Identify if resources are needed?
- When will data be collected?
- Follow-up (i.e., present data to PBIS Team, staff, etc.)
- Evaluate results by determining the following:
  - Was the plan implemented?
  - Was there a good, questionable, or poor result?
  - Determine next steps