CreativeSolvers

Template
5 Why's

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Identifying the
root cause of a problem

HOW MANY
PERSONS

TIME
MANAGEMENT

1-3 PERSONS

15-30 MIN.
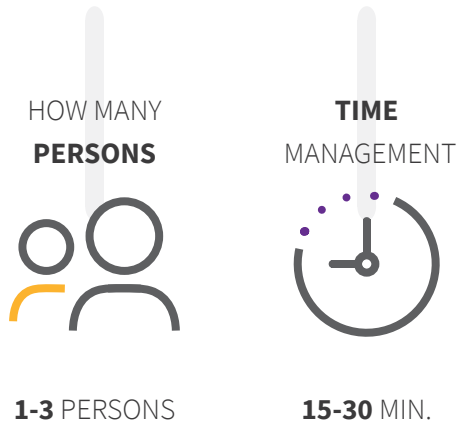
5 WHY'S INTRODUCTION

The 5 Why's method is a tool that helps identify the cause of a problem. It starts with a broad question of why a particular problem has occurred, with four more times the why question. Asking the question five times makes it easier to get to the heart of the problem. Then the core problem gives the opportunity to do something, which makes it easier to find a solution.

This tool offers the possibility to have a focused discussion and to stay on the topic by asking specific why questions and not to deviate from the problem. Not every 5 Why's interview or activity needs to be five rounds. At any time during the interview, a satisfactory conclusion can be reached that identifies the cause.

In addition, the method is also applied in User Research, to get to the core of someone's beliefs and motivations and to discover the human and emotional roots of a problem. So on the one hand it can be used to understand problems and find the cause, on the other hand it can be used to gain insight into users and customers.

Executing the Method

☐ ## Initial question
Determine what the 5 Why's method is needed for, to find the cause of a problem or to gain insight into users.
To start with the 5-Why's method, a good first question is important. Therefore, formulate the widest possible starting question. Start the question with "Why ..." and post the topic or problem after it. Then try to answer this question. Ask the question to yourself, a team or in an interview to the respondent. Write down all answers per question round.

☐ ## Narrow down
Based on the first answer to the first why question, a second why question is asked. Therefore, narrow down the second question based on the answer.

☐ ## Keep narrowing down
Then keep narrowing down and answering the question in questions three and four.

☐ ## Fifth why
Finally, the fifth why question is asked. This will zoom in on a solution. Summarize the answers to the why questions. Write down the cause and formulate a possible solution based on the cause of the problem.

☐ ## Apply further
Subsequently, the formulated cause can be used and transferred to other methods as a basis for finding solutions and ideas.

Tick off the steps