



WHAT IS A PROBLEM STATEMENT?

“A Problem Well-stated Is Half Solved.” - Albert Einstein

Einstein recognized that the manner in which a problem is stated directs and often limits the solutions suggested.



GOOD

If we ask, “In what ways might we build a better mousetrap,” we will come up with solutions to improve the little device that traps rodents.



BETTER

But if we ask, “In what ways might we kill mice,” then we open up a whole new range of options in which trapping the little devils is just one possibility among many.



BEST

If we go one step further and ask, “In what ways might we get rid of mice,” then killing them is shown to be very limiting indeed (most people would rather get rid of mice than kill them).

In brainstorming, Problem Statements begin with **“IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT WE...”** often abbreviated as **IWWW**... and the sentence is then completed in any manner we wish. Always develop several Problem Statements and select the one that captures the essence of the problem and is likely to generate the most ideas. We recommend you interact with the client/prospect prior to the brainstorming session, to develop a clear Problem Statement. This is absolutely necessary if the client will not be present at the session, and is a good idea even if the client will be present.