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## 1. IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

### 1.1. Background

In the era of modern technology and prosperity, people around the world still face great social and ecological problems such as: poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, violence, homelessness, wars, spread of infectious diseases, pollution, climate change and many others. Social problems as we identify and label them, change over time, geography and culture. Teen pregnancy or senior citizens depression might be labeled a social problem in one country, but not in another.

Social reactions to social problems can be very different. Some people are more observant and compassionate than others. Some people blame the social condition on the individuals themselves, other see a wider spectrum of root causes and contributing factors.

In order to formulate a social mission and a social goal, social entrepreneurs need to fully understand the social problem they are addressing, they need to map all causes and effects of the problem, identify the target group affected by the problem and also get to know the existing solutions. Only then, their idea for a social enterprise will have strong foundations and be more likely to succeed.

### 1.2. Module objectives

- Understanding the what are social problems
- Identifying objective and subjective elements of social problems
- Understanding the historical path dependency of social problems
- Grasping the concept of sociological imagination
- Identifying individual and systemic causes of social problems
- Mapping social problems

### 1.3. Materials

- Introductory case study on The Delancey Street Foundation
- Presentation slides
- Discussion questions
- Beneficiary Canvas for Social Enterprises
- Suggested tools for students to use
- Helpful links



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## 1.4. Module content

- ✓ Research a social problem of your choice, show facts and figures, identify its root causes and contributing factors.
- ✓ Describe the disadvantaged group of society that your problem concerns: age, sex, status, common features, challenges etc.
- ✓ Identify existing short-term remedies (short term solutions) and long-term lasting solutions.
- ✓ Are there any existing regional solutions (government programs, local initiatives) and why are they not good enough?
- ✓ Research how has this problem been addressed in other countries – make an overview and choose best practices.
- ✓ Brainstorm ideas that can identify potential business opportunities within the area of your problem; innovative and bold ideas for a potential social enterprise.

## 1.5. Helpful links

<http://www.delanceystreetfoundation.org>

Eitzen, D. S., Zinn, M. B and Smith, K. E. (2012). Social Problems, Allyn & Bacon

Mills, C. W. (1959). 2000. *The sociological imagination*, Oxford University Press

Mooney, L. A., Knox, D and Schacht, C. (2017). Understanding Social Problems, Wadsworth

Defourny, J., Nyssens, M. 2010. Conceptions of Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship in Europe and the United States: Convergences and Divergences. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 32-53

# IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING SOCIAL PROBLEMS



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## 2 Defining perspectives (a):

**(1) Professional / Academic**

**(2) Public**

## 3 Defining perspectives (b):

**(1) Objective**

**(2) Subjective**

## 4 Solving social problems:

**(1) Social innovation**

**(2) Social entrepreneurship**

## 5 Useful links

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Why do we need to agree a meaning  
for the concept of social problem?





The understanding of social problems differs among cultures

Global economy results in global problems with different consequences for people

*“A social problem is any **condition** or **behaviour** that has **negative consequences** for **large numbers of people** and that is **generally recognized** as a condition or behaviour that needs to be **addressed**”*



Which and how many frameworks can we recognise in the definition of social problem?

- *SOCIAL CHANGE*
- *SOCIAL INNOVATION*
- *SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP*
- *SOCIAL WORK*
- *SOCIAL / HUMAN DEVELOPMENT*
- *SOCIAL EQUITY*
- *SOCIAL WELFARE*

*condition*

*behaviour*

*negative consequences*

*large numbers of people*

*generally recognized*

*needs to be addressed*

# Framework and general definition

Framework	Issues				
<i>social change</i>	<i>Resistance to change</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Pregress</i>	<i>Modernity</i>	<i>Productivity</i>
<i>social innovation</i>	<i>Solutions</i>	<i>Innovation</i>	<i>Definition of problems</i>	<i>Creativity</i>	<i>Usability</i>
<i>social entrepreneurship</i>	<i>Transfer innovations to business</i>	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Benefit</i>	<i>Viability</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<i>social work</i>	<i>Introducing changes</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Dissemination</i>	<i>Insurance</i>
<i>social / human development</i>	<i>Policies</i>	<i>Efficiency</i>	<i>Complexity</i>	<i>Equality</i>	<i>Efficiency</i>
<i>social equity</i>	<i>Rights</i>	<i>Justice</i>	<i>Oportunities</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>	<i>Diversity</i>
<i>social welfare</i>	<i>Wealth</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Work</i>





Multi-causality of social problems

Holistic perspective required

Valuable contributions from several frameworks



**Agreement on definition must come from the**

**Analysis of the context**

**Triangulation of perspectives**

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# Perspectives (a)

(1) Professional

(2) Public





## Professional vs. public definitions

*Social problem: how can we aware about the existence of a social problem?*

*CRITERIA*

*Sociology*

*Public opinion*

## Sociology

### *Professional: Looking for an universal definition*

*A social problem is a way of behaviour that is regarded by a substantial part of social order as being in violation of one or more generally accepted or approved norms*

*Merton & Nisbet*

### **REAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

#### **Criteria**

##### **Total population size**

- Number of significant people
- Significant people or strategically placed groups
- Issue-specific public

##### **Real problem**

- Norms

## Public opinion

*Public: Part of the social problem*

*Patterns of public opinion*

### **SURVEYS**

#### **Criteria**

##### **Indicators**

- *Ranks of problems*
- *Evolution of the ranks*
- *Associating the ranks to structural changes*
- *Association the ranks to juncture changes*

##### **Real problem**

- *Norms*



Summary: Mismatch between professional and public definitions

Sociology: *Frequently breaks away of the professional definitions*

Public: *Lack of capacity for general and objective definitions of problems*

*Cuber and Harper*

*Giving both expert and public opinion a place in the definition of social problem*

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# Perspectives (b)

- (1) Objective
- (2) Subjective



## Objective + Subjective definitions

*Social problem: to what extent does the public consider it a problem?*

### CRITERIA

*Negative consequences  
Need to be addressed*





## Objective

*How do we know about the negative consequences of a problem?*

*(high social debate on which are the negative consequences)*

*e.g.: PUBLIC JURY, Spain*

### Pregunta 4

En todos los sistemas judiciales se cometen errores. En su opinión, ¿qué es peor: condenar a una persona inocente o dejar libre a una que es culpable?

Condenar a una persona inocente	65,5
Dejar libre a una persona culpable	25,4
N.S.	6,9
N.C.	2,2
(N)	(1.834)

### *What is worse?*

- *to condemn an innocent person*
- *to see a guilty person go free*

## Subjective

*How do we know if a behaviour or condition needs to be addressed?*

*(high social debate on whether or not a condition or behaviour needs to be addressed)*

*e.g.: CIVIL LIBERTIES & PUBLIC SAFETY, Spain*

### Pregunta 11

Ahora le voy a hacer unas preguntas sobre libertades civiles y seguridad pública. ¿Cree Ud. que los distintos niveles de gobierno y administraciones en España deberían tener o no deberían tener derecho a...?

	Si, sin ninguna duda	Probablemente deberían tener derecho	Probablemente no deberían tener derecho	No, de ninguna manera deberían tener derecho	N.S.	N.C.	(N)
Vigilar a la gente con cámaras de seguridad en lugares públicos	22,1	29,7	19,7	24,2	3,8	0,4	(1.834)
Vigilar correos electrónicos y otra información compartida en Internet	12,7	21,0	21,6	36,4	7,6	0,7	(1.834)

*Do you think that the Government should have the right to?*

- *Monitor people with cameras in public places*
- *Monitor emails and other information shared in the internet*

### Summary: Constructionist view of social problems

Social problems are said to exist when people define conditions as problematic

*Objective:* confirm they exist



*Subjective:* confirm they need to be addressed

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# Solving Social Problems

- (1) Social Innovation
- (2) Social Entrepreneurship





## Social Innovation

### *What is Social Innovation*



## SOCIAL INNOVATION PROGRAMS *CASE STUDY*

*LASIN*

*SEASIN*

*COMMON GOOD FIRST*



## Social Entrepreneurship

### *What is Social Entrepreneurship*



## TASK

*List differences between*

*Social innovations AND Social entrepreneurship*



# Useful links

<https://www.commongoodfirst.com/>

<http://www.seasin-eu.org/>

<http://www.lasin-eu.org/>



For your attention

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## Delancey Street Foundation

*"Delancey Street is the place where hitting bottom begins a climb to new heights."*

Dr Mimi Silbert

The Delancey Street Foundation (simply referred to as Delancey Street) is a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco. The Foundation provides residential rehabilitation services and vocational training for substance abusers and convicted criminals. Its main aim is to



reintegrate its residents into mainstream society through engaging them in work for various businesses - restaurants, catering and moving companies. What is interesting, is that all of these businesses are wholly managed and run by the residents themselves.



John Maher was a former drug addict and a bum. In 1971 he decided to change his life and together with three friends he started creating the foundation. At first, the foundation had great problems to find a building to operate in. Potential neighbors didn't want to live next to ex-convict rehabilitation center. At the end of 1972 Maher met a criminologist – Mimi Silbert, they fell in love and started developing the foundation together.

Mimi had a Master's degree in counseling psychology and a PhD in criminology (both from University of Berkley), so she was perfect for the job. She soon realized that ex-convicts have barely any chance to build a new life, because they are mostly from underprivileged groups of the society and cannot count on any kind of support. Instead of creating better lives, they are usually pulled back into abuse, violence and crime, as that is all they know. There is also a big problem with their employability, because they rarely have professional skills, suitable education and work ethics.

Mimi and John were able to see the systemic lack of opportunity and support for convicted criminals. This injustice moved them deeply and triggered them to structure a rehabilitation program, which secured a job and accommodation for people convicted in the past. In the mid 80's John left the foundation and Mimi took over the running of the Delancey Street. Since then, she has received numerous awards for her work in the foundation.

The first line of business for the foundation was a moving company employing ex criminals.

Nowadays it is famous for delivering professional services through several types of businesses: a construction company, an automotive repair service, a restaurant, catering & event planning, a moving company, specialty advertising sales, digital print shop, indoor decorative plants company,



landscaping company and many others. All those companies serve not only as training schools for the residents, but also are a fully operating money making businesses. Delancey Street also depends on donations and has never relied on government stipends, which made them independent and self-sustaining.

The minimum residency in Delancey Street is two years, but in average, residents stay about four years, while at that time being drug, alcohol and crime-free. During the program, residents can receive a high school equivalency degree and are trained in 3 different marketable skills. But besides this, they can also learn useful social and interpersonal skills, which will help them in their life in the society. They become part of a working community, have a place to live and food on the table. They simply receive an opportunity to change their life around. Rules of staying in the program are very strict – any act or threat of violence is followed by immediate removal from Delancey Street. Interestingly, former gang members, who have sworn to kill each other, live and work together peacefully starting in dorm-rooms and moving up into their own apartments. Residents learn to work together promoting non-violence through a principle 10 called “each-one-teach-one” where each new resident is responsible for helping guide the next arrival.



Delancey Street is the US leading organization for former substance abusers, ex-convicts, homeless and others who have

hit bottom. It has served many thousands of residents in 6 locations throughout the United States - San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Mexico, North Carolina, New York and South Carolina. They help people of all ages, from teenagers to senior citizens, of all races and ethnicities, men and women. Most of them are unskilled, functionally illiterate, and have a personal history of violence and generations of poverty. Through 40 years of fulfilling a model of social entrepreneurship, education and rehabilitation, the Foundation helps the residents change their lives around and achieve extraordinary accomplishments.

Case study questions:

1. What social problem did Mimi identify?
2. How do we know we can call it a “social problem”? What are the criteria for labeling a phenomenon a “social problem”?
3. What makes human beings perceptive in social problems?
4. Why do some people spot social problems while others remain uninterested?
5. Why do people not always agree what should be labeled a social problem?
6. What transforms human concern and compassion into action?

## **Helpful questions for mapping social problems**

### Problem identification:

How can you prove that this problem exists?  
What are the facts and numbers concerning the problem?  
Why can we call it a social problem?  
Is it harmful for the society?  
Does everyone agree it is a problem?  
Is the problem growing in scope? Why?  
Who is affected; which part of the society? Describe its characteristics.  
Who is affected by the problem additionally?  
Where does it exist geographically? Is it transnational?

### Causes:

What are the categories of causes of this problem?  
What are the root causes?  
What are the contributing factors?  
How are they interconnected?

### Effects:

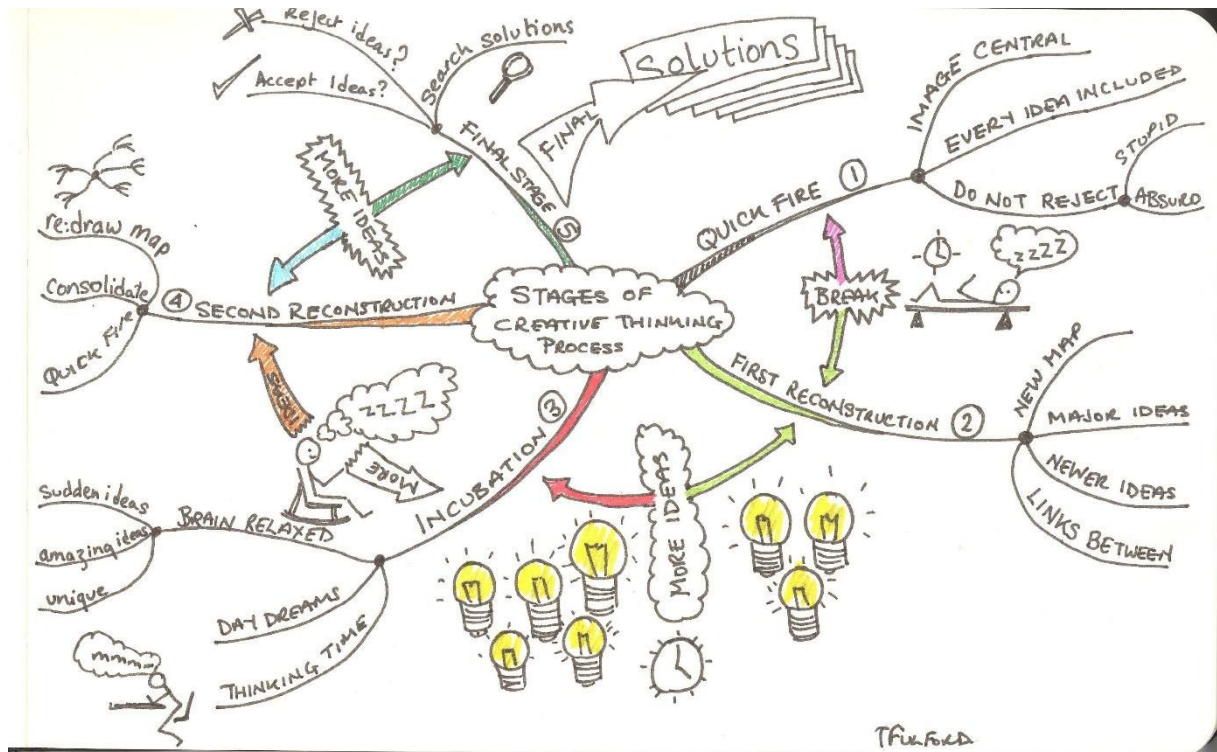
What are the potential future consequences for individuals?  
What are the potential future consequences for the society?

### Solutions:

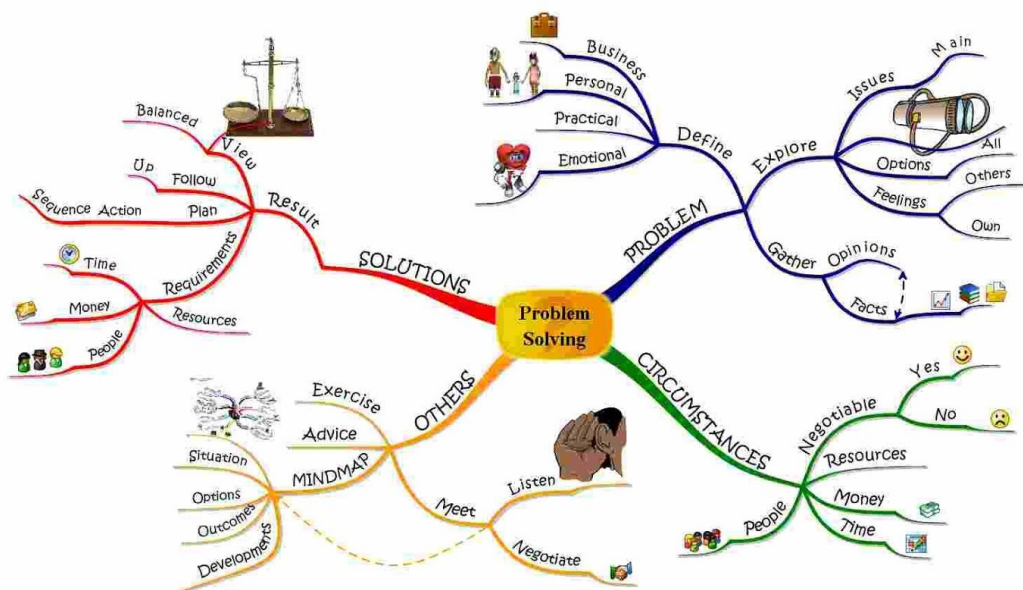
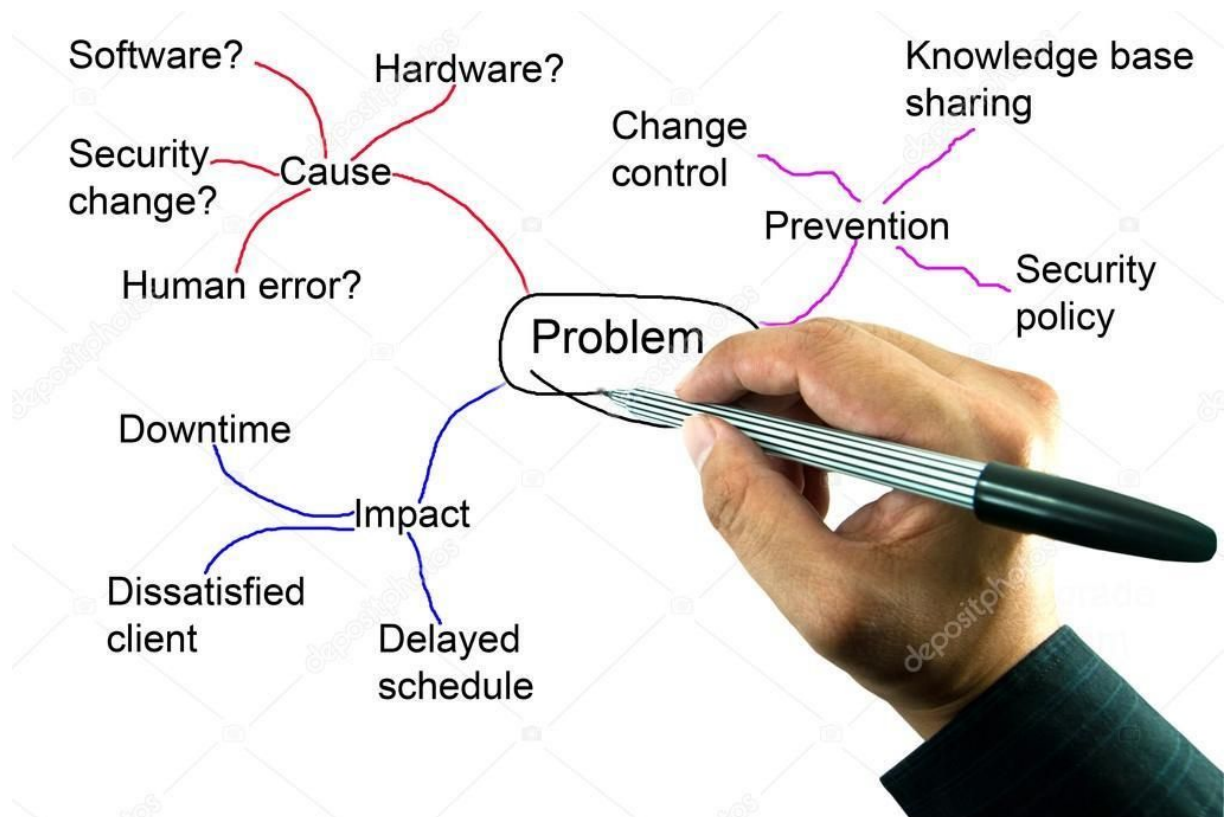
Who cares about this problem?  
Who will benefit most from solving this problem? How?  
Who's interests are at risk from solving this problem?  
Who has greatest expertise in matters related to the problem?  
Who can significantly contribute to creating a solution?  
What are the existing local solutions?  
Why are they not effective?  
Are there better solutions internationally?  
What are the necessary short-term solutions?  
What are the potential long-term solutions?

Final question: What potential financially self-sustainable solutions can be implemented?

POSSIBLE GRAPHIC WAYS OF PROBLEM MAPPING to choose from © On their basis we can create our own tool.

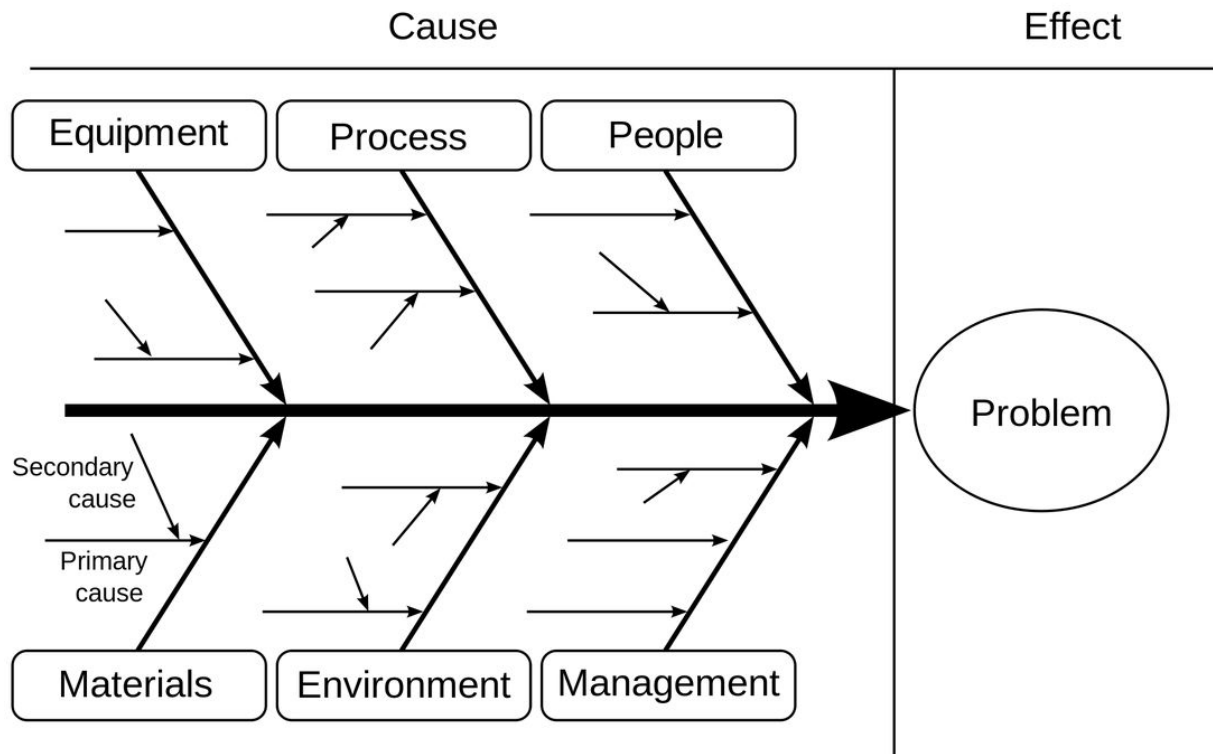








the Fishbone/Ishikawa diagram!!!



<http://freeflowpartners.co.nz/free-mind-mapping-tool-for-problem-solving-and-more/>

