Step 1
Clarify and validate the problem.
• What is the problem?
• Where did the problem occur?
• When did the problem occur?
• What is the significance of the problem?

Step 2
Break down the problem and identify performance gaps.
• Do we have enough information, or is more analysis needed?
• What is the gap between the current performance and the customer’s requirements?
• Does the data point to any specific root causes?
• Does the data indicate a bottleneck or constraint?

Step 3
Set B-SMART improvement targets.
• Balanced?
• Specific?
• Measureable?
• Attainable?
• Results-focused?
• Timely?

Step 4
Determine root causes.
• Which root cause analysis tool is appropriate?
• What root cause(s) do the tools suggest?
• Will tackling the root cause(s) improve the performance gap?
• Will tackling the root cause(s) eliminate the problem?

Step 5
Develop countermeasures.
• Common reports and templates for sharing information?
• Most practical and effective?
• Clear and detailed action plan?
• Involvement by stakeholders?

Step 6
See the countermeasures through.
• Reduce waste?
• Eliminate bottlenecks?
• Reduce variation and errors?
• Overhaul how work is done?

Step 7
Confirm results and process.
• Results relative to the performance gaps in step 2?
• Performance relative to the B-SMART targets?
• Correct root cause(s) identified?

Step 8
Standardize successful processes.
• How can improvements be standardized?
• How should lessons be communicated?
• Were new opportunities or problems identified?

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career tech
OKLAHOMA WORKS
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Apply the 8 Step Problem Solving Process

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2. Break down the problem and identify performance gaps.
   - Do we have enough information, or is more analysis needed?
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   - Balanced?
   - Specific?
   - Measureable?
   - Attainable?
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   - Which root cause analysis tool is appropriate?
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   - Reduce variation and errors?
   - Overhaul how work is done?

7. Confirm results and process.
   - Results relative to the performance gaps in 2?
   - Performance relative to the B-SMART targets?
   - Correct root cause(s) identified?

8. Standardize successful processes.
   - How can improvements be standardized?
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