

## “IS – IS NOT TOOL”

### QUALITY TOOLS IS – IS NOT

#### Description of IS-IS NOT

“Is – Is not” is a problem solving tool that explain the rational process for finding the possible root cause of the problem. This technique also helps user to avoid jumping to a false cause. At the end of the IS – IS NOT exercise user gets a confirmed true cause which helps to establish a plan to fix the problem and prevent it to recur.

#### When to use the IS-IS NOT

It is used for defining a problem to decide what is in scope and what is not going to be considered at this time. Use it also when you are part of the way through a problem and you are not sure what you are trying to do and what is not so important. You can also use it when planning a solution, to help decide what to include and what to exclude.

#### How to use the IS-IS NOT

Add a description of the overall situation at the top of the page. Problem definition is very important to start with. Ask the following questions first before coming up to the Problem definition.

- Do we have deviation from normal or specification?
- Is cause of the deviation unknown?
- Is it important to know the cause of the problem to solve it?

If the answers from all above three questions are “YES” then we have a problem.

Adding 'is' and 'is not' elements

Now simply as 'What is included here?' and 'What is not included here?', writing these down in either column as appropriate. Where it is a close division, you can add examples to clarify what falls either side of the line.

Ask the questions to generate the Is-Is Not table:

- What Identity has deviation.
- Where is the deviation.
- When was the deviation in term of Timing (start & since).
- What is the extent / scope of the deviation.

*To be careful when asking these questions, as you may 'throw the baby out with the bathwater' if you make incorrect assumptions about such as what authority you have and what you can actually solve.*

**Example:**

**Problem Analysis (Is - Is not)**

**Problem Identification:**

*One wheel of the car is giving continuous abnormal sound*

**Specify the problem:**

	IS	IS NOT	Possible Cause	Does not Explain Is and Is not information	Does Explain Is and Is not information
<b>WHAT</b>					
<i>object</i>	Wheel	Engine, transmission etc	Unbalanced	Verified - N/A	
<i>Deviation</i>	Abnormal continuous sound	interupped, periodic sound	Air Pressure out of spec.	Veified - N/A	
<b>WHERE</b>					
<i>Location</i>	Front Drive side	Front Passenger side or back	Broken / Ripped Tire		Verified - Broken / Ripped Tire
<i>Object</i>	Tire	Rim , Tire cover	Punctured / Nail	Verified - N/A	
<b>WHEN</b>					
<i>First Occurance</i>	Two days ago	Last week	Hit wth curb		
<i>Since Time</i>	Coming back from work	Going to work			
<i>Life cycle</i>					
<b>SCOPE</b>					
<i>Quantity Affected</i>	One wheel	All Wheels			
<i>Size of deviation</i>	1 Tire	4 Tire			
<i>No. of Deviations</i>	1	4			
<i>Trend if any</i>	N/A	N/A			

**Potentail Root cause of the problem:** *Broken/Ripped Tire*

### Tips on use of IS-IS NOT

*Is-Is not analysis works by making you deliberately think about the problem and in particular the boundaries of what it is or is not. It thus helps to create focus in attention and consequently is more likely to lead to the right problem being solved - it is a very common issue that an unclear boundary can lead to wandering off the path and solving unimportant problems.*

### Application of IS-IS NOT

- *IS-IS NOT application can be used to solve problems of production and manufacturing.*
- *It is to be used to find the potential root cause(s) of the issues in service departments.*
- *IS-IS NOT can also be used for planning a solution, to help decide what to include and what to exclude.*
- *IS-IS NOT can be used for decision analysis.*

### References

Kepner Tregoe's Manual for Problem Solving 2003