



**Healthy Workplace
Participatory Program**

A toolkit for advancing *Total Worker Health*®

IDEAS STEP 1

*Identify Root Causes of a Health,
Safety, and Well-being Concern*





IDEAS STEP 1

Identify Root Causes of a Health, Safety, and Well-being Concern

F Facilitator Preparation

To do:

1. **Watch training videos;** decide whether to show them during the Design Team meeting
 - a. **IDEAS Step 1 Training Video:** <https://www.uml.edu/Research/CPH-NEW/Healthy-Work-Participatory-Program/generate-solutions/identify-problems.aspx>
 - b. **Fishbone Diagram Video:** light-hearted animated video about the fishbone diagram process for root causes analysis. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0c6Gd26Fwx>
2. **Review:** Facilitator Preparation, Facilitator Agenda, and DT handouts. Carefully review the fishbone diagram process and example (*see DT handouts*).
3. **Prepare:** (i.e. print, copy) DT handouts
4. **Be prepared to explain the rationale for conducting a Root Causes Analysis (RCA).** During the first meeting agenda item (Rationale for RCA), you will ask DT members to explain their understanding of the purpose of a RCA. You will need to address any gaps in their understanding.
5. **Send the DT a friendly reminder of the meeting date and time** at least 24 hours (*preferably 2-3 days*) before the upcoming meeting

To bring:

- Flip chart paper and markers, or laptop and projector if using an electronic fishbone diagram template.** Download from: <https://www.uml.edu/Research/CPH-NEW/Healthy-Work-Participatory-Program/generate-solutions/identify-problems.aspx>
- IDEAS Step 1 DT handouts**

To know:

This IDEAS step may require 2 meetings. Duration will vary depending on the complexity of the health and safety concern, the size of the group and the meeting duration.

Key Definitions

Health, Safety and Well-being Concern	Anything that places employees' physical and/ or mental wellbeing at risk.
Root Cause Analysis	<p>A problem-solving process to identify all the underlying causes of a health or safety concern. There may be several sub-issues, each with their own contributing factors.</p> <p>The "fishbone diagram" activity used within Step 1 is an example of one technique for Root Cause Analysis.</p>
Sub-issue	<p>A smaller part or aspect of the main health & safety concern.</p> <p>For example, filling too many hot coffee orders at one time may be one sub-issue that explains workers' coffee burns.</p>
Contributing Factors	<p>Anything on the job or off the job that can lead to the sub-issue.</p> <p>For example, having too few coffee servers may be a contributing factor to filling too many hot coffee orders at one time.</p>

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

A RCA provides for a more thorough understanding of why the HS&W concern is occurring.

- If we do not fully understand the causes of the problem, we may not design solution that address the true cause of the problem.
- By doing a RCA before designing solutions to the HS&W concern, we better ensure that the work of the DT will have a real impact on the HS&W concern.

Encourage Total Worker Health® thinking during the RCA. Considering sub-issues and contributing factors from work and non-work areas will lead to a more thorough understanding of the HS&W concern.

Facilitating a Fishbone Diagram Activity (along with “The Five Whys”)

1. **Start with a health, safety & well-being (HS&W) concern** (e.g. high rate of burns from coffee spills among coffee shop workers). This concern is placed at the “head” of the fish.
2. **Draw several “spines” coming off the fish’s head.** (See example in DT handouts)

Defining the sub-issues - “The First Why” (Up to 5 min.)

3. **Facilitator asks the group to brainstorm different categories of possible causes for the HS&W concern -- “why” this HS&W concern is happening.**
 - a. First, give DT a minute or so to gather their thoughts individually (they can jot notes in the notebook or on individual post-it notes)
 - b. Then, invite the team to begin the group brainstorm. Members can share and organize post it notes on a large board for a more visual, active approach.

Tip: You may consider reminding the DT about the ground rules and how to use clarifying questions to understand each others’ perspectives.

4. **Facilitator writes down all responses of the brainstorm on a separate sheet of paper.**
5. **After this initial brainstorm, facilitator helps Design Team sort the answers into a final list of Sub-Issues** they will place on the fish (One sub-issue per spine, try to identify 3-5 sub-issue themes).

Defining the contributing factors - “2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Why” (Average 2-3 min. per sub-issue.)

6. **For each Sub-Issue, the Facilitator asks “why” might this sub-issue occur.** Facilitator jots down DT responses as branches off of the sub-issue.
7. **Facilitator keeps asking “why” to prompt the team to identify as many contributing factors as possible.**
8. **The process ends when DT feels as though no other possible contributing factors remain.**
9. **Facilitator moves to next sub-issue.**

During the brainstorm portion of RCA process, DT members may produce ideas that jump around between sub-issues; be prepared to allow that to happen. Allowing the team to say what is on their mind in this stage of the process is a good way to build team engagement.

Post-meeting to do:

- **Complete (i.e. fill out) the IDEAS Step 1 Worksheet with the ideas created during the fishbone activity**
- **Worksheet alternative:** Use a fillable fishbone diagram template to create a “clean” version of the fishbone diagram using the information recorded during the meeting on flip charts.

Access the fillable fishbone template on the IDEAS Step 1 web page at: <https://www.uml.edu/Research/CPH-NEW/Healthy-Work-Participatory-Program/generate-solutions/identify-problems.aspx>



IDEAS STEP 1

Identify Root Causes of a Health, Safety, and Well-being Concern

F Facilitator Agenda

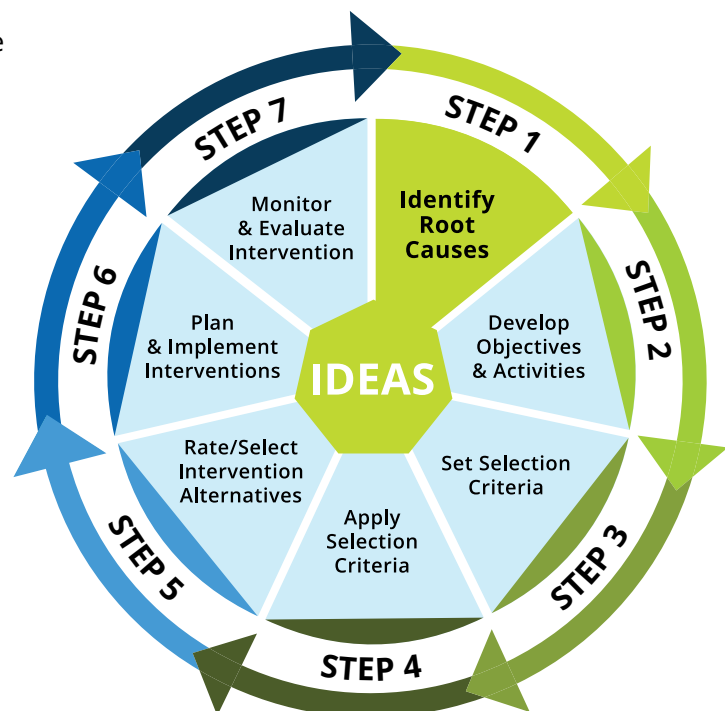
Note: This IDEAS step may require two meetings.

Meeting Intent:

The intent of this meeting is to fully understand all the factors that contribute to the health, safety, and well-being concern that we selected as our focus area.

Desired Outcomes for IDEAS Step 1:

1. Understand the concept and rationale for doing a Root Causes Analysis (RCA).
2. Understand how to use a fishbone diagram for conducting a RCA.
3. Create a fishbone diagram to map the Sub-issues and Contributing Factors underlying the chosen health, safety, and well-being concern.





Facilitator Agenda

When	What	How
0:00 (5 min)	Arrival	Show up, sign in, find a seat, settle in
0:05 (4 min)	Check-in	Round-Robin: <i>How am I arriving to this meeting?</i>
0:09 (1 min)	Approve Meeting Minutes	Facilitator asks Design Team members for any changes and then asks for a vote to approve meeting minutes
0:10 (5 min)	Review Meeting Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Intent and Desired Outcomes for the meeting 2. Facilitator briefly reviews the agenda 3. Facilitator ask for a volunteer note-taker <i>Questions and comments after each step</i>
0:15 (15 min)	<p>1. Clarity on the concept and process of a RCA</p> <p><u>Handouts:</u> Definitions</p> <p>Fishbone coffee spill example and worksheet</p> <p>IDEAS Step 1: Identify Root Causes (<i>coffee spill example</i>)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteers read aloud the definitions of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Health, Safety, and Well-being Concern b. Root Causes Analysis c. Sub Issue d. Contributing Factors e. Fishbone Diagram <p><i>Ask for different volunteers to read aloud the definitions in the handout</i></p> <p><i>Using a common vocabulary will help us communicate more easily in the meetings</i></p> 2. Clarifying questions <i>Check to see if anyone needs any further explanation of any of the terms</i> 3. Facilitator reviews the process for RCA <i>(Follow along the example in the handout)</i> <i>Summarize and highlight the instructions</i> 4. Dialogue: Why a RCA is important for addressing HS&W concerns <i>Pose the questions and pause (Counting to 10 silently to yourself helps create the space for someone to reply)</i> <i>Listen to the responses. Provide additional responses, if needed</i>



When	What	How
		<p>5. Clarifying questions, if needed <i>Check for questions</i></p> <p>6. Facilitator illustrates the Fishbone process using coffee spill example <i>Highlight the main process steps</i></p> <p>7. Clarifying questions, as needed <i>Check for questions as you walk through steps 4 & 5</i></p>
0:30 (40 min)	<p>2. Shared understanding of the root causes of the HS&W concern</p> <p>Handouts: Fishbone notes</p>	<p>1. Facilitator sets stage for the fishbone activity <i>(a RCA for our priority HS&W issue)</i> <i>Make it clear to the group that they will now try this process themselves</i> <i>Review the process steps before you engage in the process</i></p> <p>2. Each person: Write down your thoughts about different categories of causes of this HS&W concern? (~1-2 min.)</p> <p>3. Group Brainstorm: Share out your ideas to the group (~5 min.) <i>Initially record their brainstorm as a list</i> <i>Work with the DT to determine which causal themes go on the "spines" of the fish</i> <i>Select one spine (cause) to start with</i></p> <p>4. Group Brainstorm: What could be contributing factors to that cause? (2-3 minutes for each spine (cause)) <i>Encourage your group to keep moving and not get stuck</i> <i>If they do - move to the next category. Don't encourage them to sit on any aspect of the analysis for too long</i></p> <p>5. Repeat for each spine (cause) <i>When exercise is complete ask: Is there anything missing?</i></p>
1:10 (5 min)	3. Next Steps	<p>1. Facilitator reviews preparation for next meeting</p> <p>2. Generate/review other next steps, as needed</p>
1:15 (5 min)	Check-out	3. Round-robin: One word to describe how you are feeling as you leave this meeting
1:20	Adjourn	

