



SMART Tool

PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Define the problem

Be as specific as possible. Ask yourself some of the following questions:

- What is the problem exactly?
- Do I recognise that a problem actually exists?
- Do I see the issue as a problem?
- Is it my problem or someone else's problem?
- Do I need to act immediately on the problem, or can it wait?
- When does it usually happen?
- Who is involved?
- What time and day will it happen?
- What has usually happened?
- What are my usual thoughts and feelings in this situation?
- Is it within my control to do something about it?

2. List all the things you could do

Brainstorm! Be as creative as possible. Write down every possible strategy. Don't throw out any ideas yet. Don't worry about whether it will work at this stage – just let yourself think of every possible option. Some important considerations for this step are to:

- Come up with as many solutions to the problem as you can.
- Talk about solutions with friends, family and in a SMART group.
- Think outside the box!
- Keep an open mind and don't be negative (e.g. 'That won't work').

3. Sift through your ideas

- Which ideas are plausible and achievable?
- Circle the ideas that are likely to work.

4. Develop a strategy

- Write down a plan for 7 days – be specific and SMART!

5. Evaluate your strategy



Now you've come up with some ideas, ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I working on a solution?
- Is my plan working?
- Am I getting the outcome that I wanted?
- How do I know if my plan has worked?
- Do I need to work on another solution?