

Week 14: The problem solving essay (continued)

Problem Solving Essay

REVIEW:

Here are the stages in problem solving:

1. Identify a situation
2. Determine it's a problem (by identifying negative effects)
3. Determine causes
4. Propose solutions
5. Defend solutions

In last week's discussion, we listed some "situations" and justified them as problems. This week we will look at two things that are VITAL to understanding problem solving: **causes and solutions**.

Remember, to convince somebody that a situation is really a problem, you have to show net negative effects (more negative than positive) from that situation.

There are never effects without causes.

So once we know we have a problem, our next step is to find the causes of that problem. Only if we know the causes can we find solutions. If our proposed solutions do not address the causes, our solutions are unlikely to work.

Let me give you an example:

Let's say that I have a constant headache. It is quite debilitating and painful. So I decide that my solution is to take four Advil every four hours, every day. This takes most of the pain away and keeps my headache from overly interfering with my life.

But I have not really addressed the CAUSE(S) of my headache, have I? I've only addressed the symptoms. To address the cause(s), I have to go to the doctor and find out what's being this headache. Once I know that, we can address the headache once and for all, and hopefully solve the problem for good.

You must do the same in problem solving. Find the causes, and then select solutions that directly address those causes.

READING

Review Chapter 13 in *The Super Compact Guide*

THE PROBLEMS SOLVING ESSAY DISCUSSION FORUM, Part 2

Once you've completed the reading, go to the Problem Solving Essay Discussion Part 2 link. Review my opening question and respond, and then respond to at least TWO of your classmates throughout the week.

THE PROBLEM SOLVING ESSAY ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT SUBMISSION FORUM

By midnight Sunday night, post the rough draft of your Problem Solving Essay to the Problem Solving Essay Rough Draft Submission Forum. Next week you will return to this forum to download at least THREE of your classmates' drafts to review. You will post those peer reviews in the Week 14 Problem Solving Essay Peer Review Forum, which will be available next week.