

Brainstorming is stimulating and satisfying. The satisfaction comes from finding good workable solutions to problems, and defining the problem upfront is a real aid

**Start** by is to writing your problem or the current state (Step a1). Don't worry too much about quality at this point - simply making a start is significant. I often work on the future state (Step b1) at the same time. Next, expand on your problem by asking the following questions:

who **does** it affect ; does not affect. / what does it effect; does not affect. / how does it effect; does not affect. / when is it a problem ; is not a problem. / where is it a problem; is not a problem.

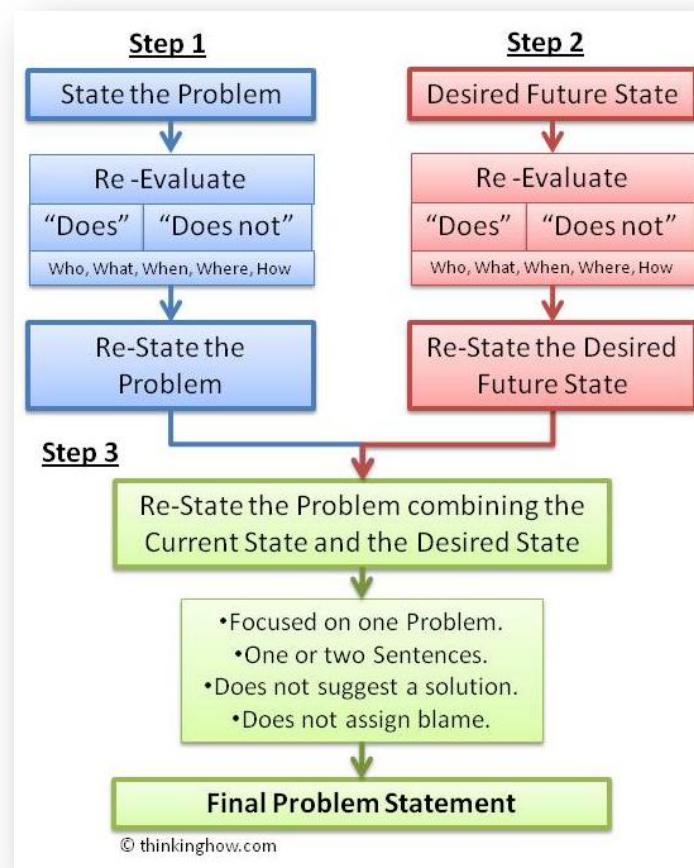
Now, re-write your problem statement based on those answers.

**The Second step** is the same as the first, but focuses on the Desired or Future State.

**The Third Step** is to combine your revised Problem or Current State and your desired Future State into a single statement. This might take a couple of attempts but stick with it. Finally, review your new problem statement against the following criteria:

- Focused on only one Problem.
- One or two sentences long.
- Does not suggest a Solution.

You should then have a concise and well balanced **Problem Statement** ready for a brainstorming session. It should be unambiguous and devoid of assumptions. It will enable you or your group to focus in on the problem and work toward solutions that truly fits.



Step

**1a**

Write down what you think the problem is.

Key words:

Step

**1b**

Look at your Problem & expand the following:

Who does the problem affect?

What happens?

When does the problem occur?

Where does the problem occur?

How does the problem occur?

**Step** Look at your Problem &  
**1c** answer the following:

Who is not affected by the problem?

What doesn't happen?

When doesn't the problem occur?

Where does the problem not occur?

How



Step

**2a**

Write down the desired  
or future state.

Key words:

Step      Expand your future  
**2b** state with the following.

Who does the future state affect?

What happens?

When does the future state occur?

Where does the future state occur?

How does the future state occur?

**Step** Look at the future state  
**2c** & answer the following:

Who is not affected by the future?

What doesn't happen in the future?

When doesn't the future state occur?

Where does the future state not occur?

How

Step

**2d**

Re-State the Future  
State based on the  
answers in 2b and 2c

Key words:

Step **3a** Combine the revised  
Problem Statement and  
Future State

Key words:

step

**3b**

Review the new  
problem statement

Does it address only one problem?

One or two sentences only?

Does not suggest a solution?

Does not attribute blame?

Step

**3c**

# Final Problem Statement

Key words: