

IB007-15 Problem-Solving in Organisations

21/22

Department

Warwick Business School

Level

Foundation

Module leader

Mona Mensmann

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This is a core module for WBS Foundation Year students.

To equip students with the capacity to effectively communicate, solve problems and be creative and innovative in their work, learning and other daily tasks. Problem-solving skills can improve students' success in the classroom, in their daily lives and, more importantly, in their careers. Thus, the module will establish a valuable foundation-level capability that will help students improve their skills and raise their confidence levels for degree-level study, regardless of their chosen course.

Specific aims of the module include:

- To promote an understanding of key definitions, concepts and theories in regards to organisational problem-solving.
- To provide students with a foundational understanding of effective communication in organisations in order to facilitate decision making and problem-solving.
- To promote an understanding of the key ways a leader can facilitate problem-solving.
- To encourage recognition and understanding of common pitfalls or challenges in decision making, such as biases and ethical issues.
- To encourage students to approach problems in a creative and innovative way.

- To develop skills in solving problems as individuals as well as in a team.
- To facilitate an understanding of the importance of creativity and innovation to organisations and society
- To build students' confidence in applying problem-solving techniques, both as individuals and in teams.
- To develop related personal skills such as leadership, teamwork and communication.
- To introduce students to the field of social science, and to familiarise them with asking questions/delivering answers through research in this field.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

To equip students with the capacity to effectively communicate, solve problems and be creative and innovative in their work, learning and other daily tasks. Problem-solving skills can improve students' success in the classroom, in their daily lives and, more importantly, in their careers. Thus, the module will establish a valuable foundation-level capability that will help students improve their skills and raise their confidence levels for degree-level study, regardless of their chosen course.

Specific aims of the module include:

- To promote an understanding of key definitions, concepts and theories in regards to organisational problem-solving.
- To provide students with a foundational understanding of effective communication in organisations in order to facilitate decision making and problem-solving.
- To promote an understanding of the key ways a leader can facilitate problem-solving.
- To encourage recognition and understanding of common pitfalls or challenges in decision making, such as biases and ethical issues.
- To encourage students to approach problems in a creative and innovative way.
- To develop skills in solving problems as individuals as well as in a team.
- To facilitate an understanding of the importance of creativity and innovation to organisations and society
- To build students' confidence in applying problem-solving techniques, both as individuals and in teams.
- To develop related personal skills such as leadership, teamwork and communication.
- To introduce students to the field of social science, and to familiarise them with asking questions/delivering answers through research in this field.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Lecture topics may include but are not limited to:

General communication

Conflict

Negotiation

Being a leader
Motivation (leading others and leading yourself)
Followership
General decision-making
Biases in decision-making
Ethical decision-making
Introduction to creativity and the creative person
Creative problem solving skills
Creativity in teams
Team creativity strategies
Innovation in organisations
Entrepreneurship
Innovation in society

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the definitions of different problem-solving concepts (e.g., creativity, leadership, negotiation), and recognise instances where these are being used to improve performance.
- Understand key communication concepts.
- Understand the definitions of basic leadership concepts.
- Understand common decision making errors (e.g., biases, unethical decisions).
- Understand the individual creative process.
- Understand the team creative process.
- Understand the role creativity and innovation play in starting businesses, improving organisational performance, and improving society.
- Identify problems and opportunities that require different problem-solving techniques.
- Generate, evaluate and plan the implementation of ideas.
- Metacognition to recognize when they may fall into common decision making biases.

Indicative reading list

Effective Organisational Communication: Perspectives, Principles, and Practices by Richard Blundel, Kate Ippolito and David Donnarumma Publisher: Pearson (2012)
Thinking, fast and slow by Daniel Kahneman Publisher: Penguin (2012)
Leadership by Peter G. Northouse Publisher: Sage (2015)
Creativity 101 by James C. Kaufman Publisher: Springer Publishing Company; 1st edition (2009)
Zig Zag: The surprising path to greater creativity by Keith Sawyer Publisher: Jossey Bass; 1st edition (2013)
Group Genius: The creative power of collaboration by Keith Sawyer Publisher: Basic Books (2008)

Subject specific skills

Be able to apply key communication techniques effectively to solve problems.
Be able to effectively utilize basic leadership and followership strategies.
Apply techniques to avoid common decision making errors (e.g., biases, unethical decisions).

Effectively apply the individual creative process to solve problems independently.

Effectively work together in teams to solve problems creatively.

Transferable skills

Decide when and how to use different communication techniques.

Apply Leadership and followership skills.

Apply creative problem-solving skills.

Study

Study time

| Type | Required |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Lectures | 10 sessions of 2 hours (13%) |
| Seminars | 9 sessions of 1 hour (6%) |
| Private study | 48 hours (32%) |
| Assessment | 73 hours (49%) |
| Total | 150 hours |

Private study description

Private Study.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

| | Weighting | Study time |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Individual Assignment (15 CATS) | 60% | 44 hours |
| Group Presentation (15 CATS) | 20% | 15 hours |
| Individual Presentation (15 CATS) | 20% | 14 hours |

Feedback on assessment

Students will receive written feedback on their assessments from the tutor. The module will also use peer review and one-to-one feedback to support learning.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UIBA-N403 Undergraduate Accounting and Finance (with Foundation Year)
- UIBA-N20E Undergraduate Management (with Foundation Year)
 - Year 1 of N20E Management (with Foundation Year)
 - Year 1 of N23E Management with Digital Innovation (with Foundation Year)
 - Year 1 of N23F Management with Entrepreneurship (with Foundation Year)
 - Year 1 of N23D Management with Finance (with Foundation Year)
 - Year 1 of N254 Management with Marketing (with Foundation Year)