

Process Improvement Made Easy: Root Cause Analysis In Action

By Lyndsay Swinton

Root cause analysis sounds painful, like a dentist's nastiest procedure. But the reality is not so bad. Here's an example of why root cause analysis is valuable, saving time, money and headaches.

Where Eagles Dare...

The local authority was paying a small fortune for cleaning bird droppings from bronze statue in the central square. First they tried different coatings, each claiming to be easier to clean than the last. Then they tried a noise generator to scare the birds away, but to no avail. Getting more creative with their solutions, a bird of prey was encouraged to live in the central square, but even that couldn't keep the birds away.

Cunning Plans

One evening the lighting in the square failed and wasn't fixed for 3 days. When the contractor came to fix the fault, he noticed the statue was remarkably clean, which he mentioned to his local authority colleague. "Interesting," thought this smart lady, "I wonder what would happen if....." and off she went with a cunning plan. She switched the lights on later in the evening, and the statue remained ever more mess-free.

Bright Lights!

And how? At dusk, insects were attracted to the bright lights highlighting the esteemed bronze statue. And where insects go, birds go too, hungry for an evening meal. By switching the lights on after dusk, the insects weren't attracted to the square, and the birds went elsewhere for food. Simple!

Save yourself from cleaning up a lot of bird poo by using root cause analysis to solve problems quickly and precisely.

By Lyndsay Swinton

Owner, Management for the Rest of Us

www.mftrou.com

[Signup for Monthly Management Tips here](#)