A white curved object on a black background

Description automatically generated

This worksheet is designed to support teams in brainstorming a list of potential symptoms and root causes for problems in their system. It supports analyzing and developing a shared understanding of the problem. This tool may be used in isolation, or as part of a deeper root cause analysis investigation.

Logistics

**Roles:** Facilitator, timekeeper, and notetaker (optional)

**Size:** 3-5 people

**Time:** 20-30 min

Materials

**In-person:** Large poster paper, markers, and sticky notes.

**Virtual:** Shared workspace, such as Google Jamboard.

Instructions for Use

1. **Introduce** the suspected or known problem area.
2. **Invite** meeting participants to independently brainstorm a list of related problems.
3. **Share out** trees. Note similarities and key differences. \*\*Equity pause\*\*
4. **Create** one shared tree that reflects group consensus.

1. **Develop** an action plan to investigate these suspected causes.
2. (Optional) **Update** your tree as you refine your understanding of the problem.



**Note:** This practice gets our mental models on the table. It does not mean we now know the root cause, but it does direct our attention towards what to probe and investigate.

**Brainstorming Space**

**Problem Area:** Click to enter your problem area here

*Please see page 2 to map related suspected problems or symptoms.*

A diagram of a tree with blue leaves

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**Key Takeaways**

1. Enter text here.

2. Enter text here.

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**Lingering Questions**

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2. Enter text here.

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**Action Plan: Investigate the Problem**

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3. Enter text here.