

# Problem Analysis: Social Process Triangles

Submitted by jon on Tue, 2006-12-05 19:01.

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**Editors rating:**

**Group facilitation methods:** [Environmental Analysis, Problem solving](#)

## Identification

**Level of process:**

Application

**Intent or purpose:**

To get as broad a perspective on the issues facing a village, community or town. The method can be used with organizations but the language of the Social Process Triangles needs to be adapted.

To experience the breadth of the problems the unit is facing.

**Optimal amount of time needed:**

3 - 6 hours

# Howto

**Level of participation:**

high

**Level of Difficulty to Facilitate:**

Specialized skills required

**Facilitator Personality Fit:**

Some knowledge of the Social Process Triangles is needed

**Setting and Materials:**

Copies of the Social Process Triangles SPT's down to the 3rd level for each participant. A wall sized version of the SPT's

**Pre-Work Required:**

The Facilitator should be familiar with the situation.

**Procedures:**

Context

1. Good (Morning). We want to take a look at the issues we are facing as a group. We want to be as inclusive as possible in our view of the organisations. We will do that by using a tool called the Social Processes.

2. Review the Social Processes down to the 3rd Level.

## Steps

1. Now we need to split up in 9 groups. Each group will concentrate on 1/9 of the Social Process Triangles. One team will focus on Resources, one on Production, one on Distribution, one on Order, one on Justice, one on Welfare, one on Wisdom, one on Style and one on Symbols.

2. In your group, discuss the triangle and its sub-triangle. Give several examples of your triangle. e.g. an example of a technical resource is farm equipment. You've got 10minutes.

3. Have each group report. This should be short and very quick. You are interested in how well they understand their triangle.

## *Brainstorm*

4. Individually brainstorm 25 issues we face as a group in your triangle. The question we are answering

is 'What are problems we are facing in the next 4 to 5 years?? You should refer to the sub-triangles in your triangle but the number of brainstormed items doesn't need to be equal of reach sub-triangle. Please do this individually.

5. As a group go around and collect the 3 most important items from each person in the team. Put them on a flip-over. Combine any duplicates. Ask for additional important items that are different from the ones listed so far. Combine duplicates. Continue this until you have 25 items on your flip-over. Put each item on a separate landscape A4 card. You have 30 minutes to do this. Are there any questions?

6. Put up 8 ? 10 columns with symbols at the top. Each column should be the width of the landscape A4 sheet. When every team is ready you can begin.

### *Organizing*

7. I would like each team to select the 3 cards that are the most concrete issue they have. Please pass them to the front when you have finished.

8. Select the first card and put it in a column. Select the second card and ask is this issue closely related to this first issue? If yes put it in the same column. If no

put it in a different column.

9. Continue with this same process until first round of 15 cards is finished.

10. When all the cards are up review the names of the cards in each of the columns. If you run out of columns you can add more or use the top and bottom of a column when the groups of cards are similar.

11. I would like each team to select 3 more of their cards that are different from the ones that are up now.

12. Repeat steps 8 and 9 until the second round is complete.

13. Read the cards and give a one or two word holding title for each column or part of column. Do not write it on above the columns.

14. Repeat steps 11 and 12.

15. Read the cards and put titles above each column or each part of column that is a unique problem. Try to use at least 3 words.

*Naming*

16. Give some examples of the type of title.

17. Read the cards in a column. Ask what is the area that this cluster of cards points to? When you have agreement about the area, ask what would be a two-word description of the problem or issue in this area.

18. Repeat this for two or three. Divide the rest of the columns among the teams and have them give titles. You may want to have them collect the cards for their column. (If you are concerned about the quality of the titles they go through all of them, although this may take more time.)

19. Ask for reports from the teams. Have them read the list of cards and then give the title. Check to see if the groups agree with the titles.

## Closing

1. We want to reflect a little on what happened.

2. What was an issue that struck you?

3. What were some of the emotions expressed during the session?

4. What did you learn from this session?

5. What is the next step we need to do with this?

## Notes

- This can be done with a community, neighbourhood, organisation or at a country level.

- You might need to explain what a brainstorm is.

- You would like from 100 to 150 brainstormed items. The number of people determines how many teams and how many items from each team. In this workshop we are assuming 5 teams of from 5 to 10 people each.

- A good way of naming problems is to use the following format: Adjective verb preposition adjective noun. For example: ?Management Pressure to Reduce Costs? or ?Consistent Overrun of Budget Estimates?. The best way of doing this is to do the last two words first which point to the social area the issue is in. The first two words identify the problem.

# Background

## **Developer:**

The Institute of Cultural Affairs

**History of Development:**

This beginnings of this method was used in the Ecumenical Institute's Summer Research Assembly in 1971.

Jon Jenkins put it in this format.

**License Model:**

Open

**Website:**

<http://www.imaginal.nl>