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| **Week 2 RESOURCES** | |
| *Highlighting* | |
| *This technique helps sort a large number of options or ideas into basic groups for further problem exploration or prioritizing.* | |
| **1.** List (or post on a board or flipchart) all the options or ideas. These may be generated by the group and written on sticky notes. |
| **2.** Find the *hits* and mark them. Hits are the most promising, important, or appealing options; those that are “right on*.” For example, ask the group: “Which options seem the most interesting, useful, or intriguing?” “Which options seem to jump off the page at you?”* |
| **3.** Number all your hits if you have a lot of them. |
| **4.** Find and identify relationships between the hits. Then examine them for similarities, and place related ones together into a grouping. *For example, ask group members: “Which options seem related?” “Which seem to fit together?” “Which options seem to be saying the same thing?”* |
| **5.** Identify the *hotspots*, or collections of hits that cluster around an issue or theme. (*For example, a number of ideas might cluster around service improvement.)* Clarify the theme for each hotspot and use it to label this hotspot*. For example: “What is the title or theme for these options in this hotspot?” “What is the subject or topic that is common to these particular options?”* |
| **6.** Restate each hotspot as a problem statement or question for further exploration*. For example: “How might we improve our order entry procedure for online customers?”* |
| **7.** You could then choose to review the new statements or clusters and assign them priorities for further work. This can be done by group consensus. |
| **8.** Take next steps**.** *For example, identify one or more hotspots and address each one: group all options together and conduct highlighting (or use another tool) again, provide time for reflection or incubation, or identify actions to be implemented.* |
| **Some tips to remember:** |
| Make sure each hotspot has only one theme. Multiple themes in a hotspot may cause problems in developing a theme because the hotspot becomes so big that the restatement is meaningless.  When the whole group is involved in decision making, provide opportunities for discussion as the groupings are formed. Allow for additional time.  Remind the group that selecting hits is not voting.  When dealing with large numbers of hits, number them and use the numbers to identify which options go with each other.  Not all hits need to be placed in a hotspot.  Using sticky notes to record options will increase the efficiency of highlighting, since you can move items easily. |
| Adapted from: Highlighting in *Toolbox for* *Creative Problem Solving: Basic Tools and Resources*, by Scott G. Isaksen, K. Brian Dorval and Donald J. Treffinger. Williamsville, New York: The Creative Problem Solving Group - Buffalo | |