

In short

We use the so-called ‘card methodology’, developed by Lisette Munneke and described in Van der Velde, Munneke, Jansen, & Dijkers (2020), to collectively explore the practice issue. In this working method, participants think up as many solutions to the practice issue as possible in the first step. Then, you collectively try to derive the causes of the problem from the solutions.

Outcome

This results in an overview of all possible causes that influence the arising of the practice issue, from different perspectives.

Approach

1. In the card methodology, you collectively take the following steps:
2. 1. Individually, write down as many solutions to the practice issue as possible on the reverse of the post-it notes (i.e. on the sticky side). Write down one solution for each post-it note. You continue this process until you’re all out of new solutions.
3. 2. Collectively, review each solution and write down the cause each solution addresses on the front of the post-it note.
4. 3. Collectively, organise the causes found using a table or a wall. Which ones should be grouped and form a category? Which categories of causes do you end up with? At what level are those causes found? What themes follow from this?

Examples

We cite the practice issue given in Van der Velde et al. (2020) as example; the issue of Dutch top-level tennis players not joining the world’s best.

Solution	Underlying problem	Aspect
Raising awareness of tennis among young children, so clubs get more new youth members	Tennis is a sport mostly popular with ages 35+, there is little new talent joining clubs	Causes in respect of tennis popularity and how many people still play tennis
Involve veteran players in coaching new talent	Currently, there are few appealing examples for many talented tennis players	
Upgrading the youth programme	The throughput of young talent is bogged down, a better youth programme could prevent this	Causes in respect of the tennis players themselves when it comes to motivation, mentality and so on.
Creating a top-level sports culture	In the Netherlands, the culture necessary for top-level sports is absent; many sports players do not have the top-level sports mentality (training consistently, keeping agreements)	
Investing in training to improve trainers	There are trainers without (further) training, as a result of which the quality of the tennis programme cannot always be guaranteed	Causes in respect of the manner of training
Investing in new innovation and technology (e.g. constructing a smart tennis court)	The speed of Dutch tennis players is not yet sufficient; things have to move faster physically, more alert and more technically skilled	

Tips for the manager

This working method can be done well in a physical meeting by placing post-it notes on a wall. Some changes are needed for online meetings. In these, a virtual whiteboard can be used on which the virtual post-it notes can be organised.

For each cluster of solutions, we collectively look at the underlying causes asking 'what does this tie into?'. These clusters are then collectively assigned a label: the aspect.

Bases

- Firstly, this working method is based on the principle that people are very good at thinking up solutions and that this often comes easier to them than thinking in terms of causes of problems. We make use of this skill by asking them to think of solutions for problems not already specified.
- Secondly, each solution is underpinned by an implicit idea of what the problem actually is. By collectively exploring these implicit ideas in step two, we shed light on the nature of the practice issue.
- Thirdly, this working method helps in arriving at a joint vision on the practice issue. The practice issue is created on the basis of the contributions of the participants (Duiveman, 2018).

Materials

- Post-it notes or a virtual whiteboard (e.g. Mural or Miro)
- Wall or table
- Pens