

Fishbone Diagram

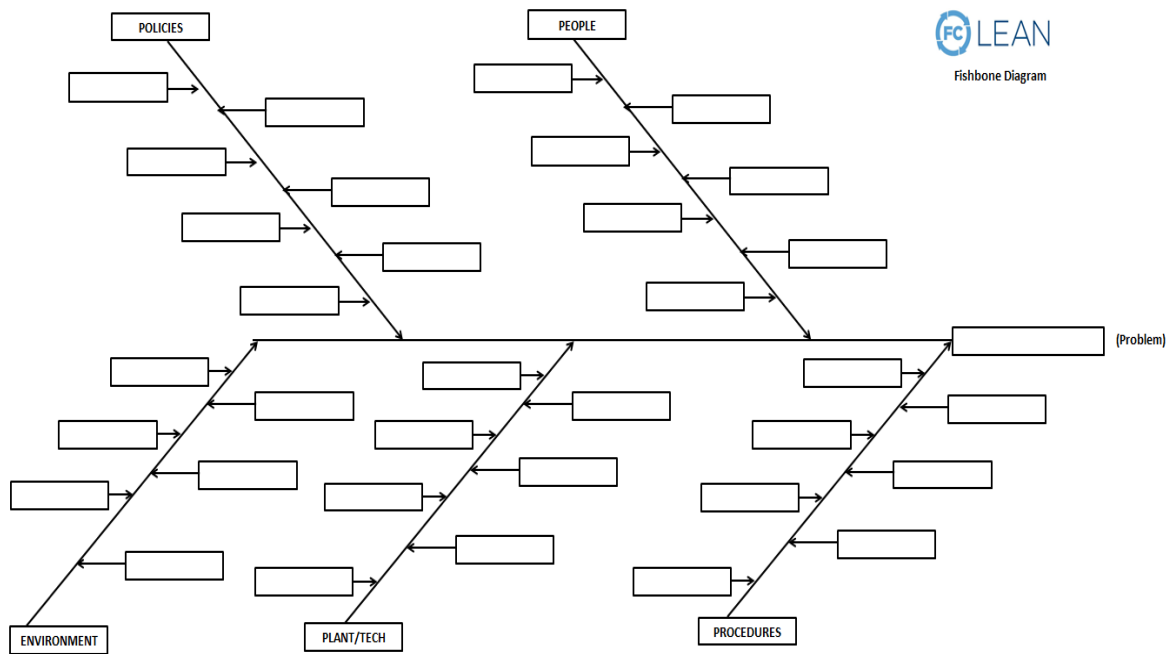
A Fishbone Diagram (also referred to as Ishikawa Diagram) is a tool used for root cause analysis. It is a way to brainstorm all potential causes of a problem.

Step 1: List the larger problem at the head of the diagram

Step 2: List potential causes of the problem in their respective groups:

- People
- Policy
- Procedure
- Plant/Technology
- Environment

Not all problems will have potential root causes in every category.



People

This section should be used to identify any people causes to the problem.

Things to consider:

- Are the procedures being followed?
- Are they clearly communicated?
- Do employees know where to find the proper procedures?
- Are we getting accurate results?

NOTE: The groups listed here of People, Policy, Procedure, Plant/Technology, and Environment are suggestions. You can add or change the sections as needed for your specific problem.

Policy

Use this section to identify any organizational policies that are in place that could be a cause to the problem. Policies can usually be found by looking through Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), speaking with management, or looking through employee handbooks.

Things to consider:

- Does the current policy conflict with another existing policy?
- Does the current policy reflect what's actually happening?
- Lack of a policy can also be a cause to a problem.

Procedure

Similar to policies, lack of a procedure can also be a cause to a problem. Procedures can also be found through interviewing employees or looking through SOPs.

Things to Consider:

- Are the procedures being followed?
- Are they clearly communicated?
- Do employees know where to find the proper procedures?
- Are we getting accurate results?

Plant/Technology

This section is used to identify any machine causes or causes from technology.

Things to consider:

- Is there an issue with the current technology that is causing the problem?
- Does the technology meet our demands?
- Do we have the right machines being used and are we using them correctly?
- Is technology necessary?

Environment

The environment section is here to list causes that are outside of our control. Environmental causes should be listed for information purposes only. There is usually nothing that can be done about environmental causes.

Things to consider:

- Are there compliance or regulatory issues that are causing the problem?
- Are there political factors at play?
- Are there weather or natural disaster causes?
- Is the economy in a recession?