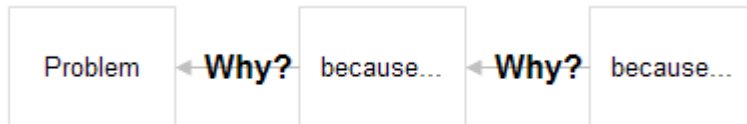


How to read a Cause Map

Start on the left. Read to the right saying "was caused by" in place of the arrows. Investigating a problem begins with the problem and then backs into the causes by asking Why questions.



The questions begin, "Why did this effect happen?" The response to this question provides a cause (or causes), which is written down to the right.



The next question is again, "Why did this effect happen?" The cause that was written down last becomes the effect for the next Why question. Anyone who's ever had a three-year-old in their life will immediately recognize how Why questions change a cause into an effect. This is fundamentally how causes and effects link together to create a chain of events. Writing down 5-Whys, shown below, is a great way to start an investigation because it's so simple.



In the Cause Mapping method, a problem within an organization is defined by the deviation from the ideal state. A Cause Map always begins with this deviation which is captured as the impact to the organizations overall goals.