Improving the Good

- **Ninja Services**
- **Problem-Solving Story (PSS)**
- **Questions & Answers**

Ninja Services
What is it?

Interdisciplinary Business Excellence.
10+ years in Asia. Greenfield Experiences.

E-mail services@ericroth.org
Internet ericroth.org/services

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Goals of this presentation

- **Create understanding**: What is a problem-solving story and how does it differ from error or project reports?
- **Convey benefits**: Why are problem-solving stories relevant to improvement, securing knowledge and dealing with mistakes?
- **Explain structure**: How is a story structured (current situation, problem, cause, measure, impact) and which analysis methods are used (e.g. 5-Why, Ishikawa)?
- **Show areas of application**: Where are problem-solving stories used (e.g. lean, CIP / KAIZEN, audits) and who benefits from them?
- **Specify quality criteria**: What makes a good story – and which typical mistakes should be avoided?
- **Create motivation**: Why is the effort worthwhile and how do you get teams to actively use the format?

KAIZEN
Method Mix / Solution Methods

Problem-Solving Story (PSS)

Definition
A problem-solving story is a structured format for presenting a specific problem, its causes, the measures taken and the impact achieved. It is used for the systematic analysis and sustainable solution of problems.

Significance
Problem-solving stories are a key tool in lean management, quality management and CIP / KAIZEN. They promote transparency, strengthen the approach to mistakes and help to secure knowledge and make improvements transparent.

Goals
- Identifying and understanding causes
- Identifying and documenting effective measures
- Avoid repetitive errors
- Facilitate learning and improve standards
- Empower teams to solve structured problems

KAIZEN Method Mix / Solution Methods

Visualization & Management

- **Team Board**

The team board serves as a communication tool for the team leader. Employees are informed at regular meetings and have the opportunity to make improvements.

- **GEMBA Walk / GEMBA Talk**

The GEMBA Walk enables managers to observe the actual work process, to get in touch with employees, to gain deeper firsthand knowledge about the work process and to discover practical opportunities for continuous improvement.

- **5S & Waste**

The 5S method is a structured approach to improve workplace organization. It aims to avoid disruptions in the workplace, lengthy searches, long transport routes, and waiting times, for example. Wastes in production and administration form the basis for practical ideas for improvement.

- **KAIZEN Maturity Level**

The KAIZEN maturity level includes the implementation of the KAIZEN as a whole and is determined by these modules: Goals (solution methods), topics (dialogue), 5S audits and level of fulfilment (solution methods).

Problem Solving & Process Quality

- **Improvement Card**

The card is a tool for capturing and placing changes within the company. It will be reviewed and discussed on t[illegible] board.

- **Problem-Solving Story (PSS)**

The problem-solving story is suitable for *problems for which the cause is not known*. The specific root cause analysis is used to avoid wrong decisions and to define measures.

- **Process Mapping (PM)**

Process mapping involves analysing an *entire process*. Using KAIZEN flashes, wastage / problems are identified, a target process and a plan of measures are defined.

- **Input-Output Check (SIPOC)**

The SIPOC method highlights *process steps* with their inputs and outputs. Supplier and customer are included in the analysis, asking: What are the demands, what are the customer's wishes?

- **Activity Structure Analysis (ASA)**

The ASA is primarily used in the administrative area to analyse activities and eliminate waste in the process (waiting time, search time, etc.).

KAIZEN

Problem-Solving Story

- **The Benefits**
- **The Method**
- **The Profile**
- **The PSS Template**
- **Tracking List**

The Benefits

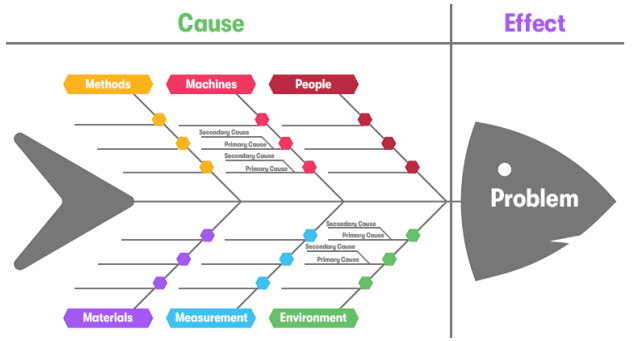
Problems arise in every company – that's completely normal.
The important thing is not whether a problem arises, but how to deal with it!

This is exactly where the **problem-solving story** (PSS) comes in:

- It is a structured tool for systematically analysing causes, developing solutions sustainably and documenting their implementation in a traceable manner.

When is a problem-solving story used?

- If a problem occurs repeatedly
- If the cause is not apparent at first glance
- When a topic needs to be resolved across all units
- Or when measures are not sustainable



Why is this important?

- Because it's not just symptoms that are being combated, but the real causes are being addressed.
- Because recurring problems cost time, money and motivation.
- Because clean problem solving strengthens trust in processes and employees.

The problem-solving story not only helps to solve the current problem – it also strengthens the learning culture, promotes teamwork and improves processes in the long term.

The Method

1. Problem Description

What is the problem?
- **Describe current situation**

What are the priorities?
- **Visualize Figures / Data / Facts (FDF), and quantify them**

What are the problem consequences?
- **Economic impact**

Measurability, deadlines
- **Formulate goal(s)**

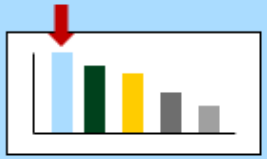
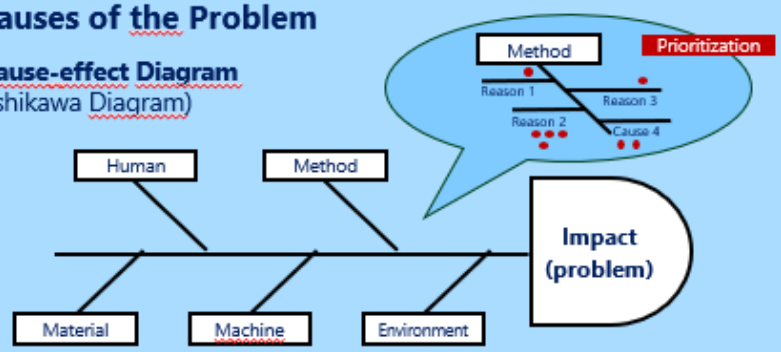


Photo
Sketches
Documentation

2. Causes of the Problem

Cause-effect Diagram
(Ishikawa Diagram)



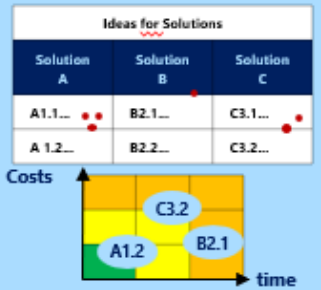
5x Why Analysis: Why? (Because) > Why? (Because) > Why? (Because) > Why? (Because) > Why? → (Because)

3. Problem-Solving

Prioritize solution ideas

Assess solution ideas

Implement solution ideas

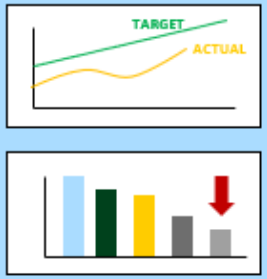


Action Plan			
WHAT	WHO	DATE	STATUS
A1.2			⊕

4. Solution Review

Carry out target-actual comparison result

Did the problem-solving lead to success?



- **YES - Problem-solving story closed**
- **NO – Proceed to step 2 or 1**

The Profile

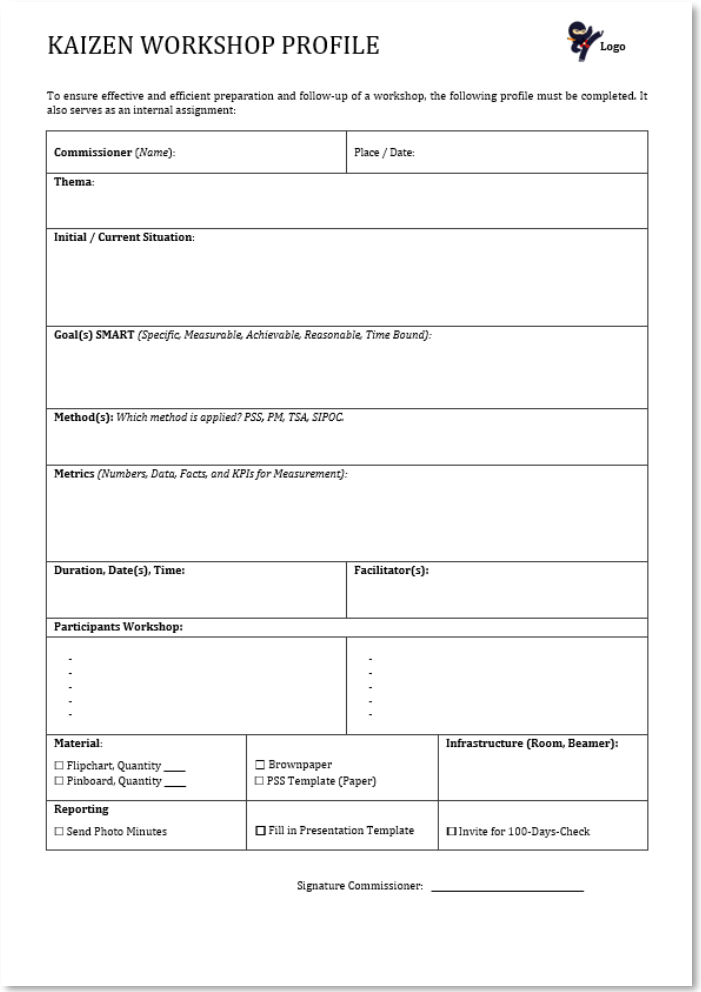
The “Profile” for KAIZEN workshops is a compact document that summarizes the most important information in a clear way. It fulfils several key functions:

Purpose of the profile

- It provides clear guidance for all participants and shows at a glance what the workshop is all about.
- It defines the organizational framework: goals, procedure, responsibilities and expected results.
- It facilitates communication in advance, such as during invitations, votes or internal approval.
- It creates commitment by providing precise information on the time, place, target group and methodology.
- Last but not least: **It also serves as an internal order.**

Advantages of the profile

- It saves time on preparation and coordination.
- It ensures transparency, as all parties involved have the same level of information.
- It can promote motivation and commitment if it is formulated in an appealing and clear way.
- It serves as documentation and reference for subsequent evaluations or follow-up workshops.



KAIZEN WORKSHOP PROFILE

Logo

To ensure effective and efficient preparation and follow-up of a workshop, the following profile must be completed. It also serves as an internal assignment:

Commissioner (*Name*):	Place / Date:
Thema:	
Initial / Current Situation:	
Goal(s) SMART *(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reasonable, Time Bound)*:	
Method(s): *Which method is applied? PSS, PM, TSA, SIPOC*	
Metrics *(Numbers, Data, Facts, and KPIs for Measurement)*:	
Duration, Date(s), Time:	**Facilitator(s):**
Participants Workshop:	
- - - - -	- - - - -

Material: ☐ Flipchart, Quantity ___ ☐ Pinboard, Quantity ___	☐ Brownpaper ☐ PSS Template (Paper)	**Infrastructure (Room, Beamer):**
Reporting ☐ Send Photo Minutes	☐ Fill in Presentation Template	☐ Invite for 100-Days-Check

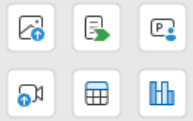
Signature Commissioner: _____

PSS Template

PSS	Team / Location:	Text hinzufügen	Topic:	Text hinzufügen	Date:	Text hinzufügen
Goal:	Text hinzufügen		Responsibility (Hat): Only 1 person	Text hinzufügen	Names:	Text hinzufügen

1. Problembeschreibung

•Text



«Magic Sentence»:	Text hinzufügen

What is the problem? Why is it a problem? What impact(s) does the problem have?

page 1

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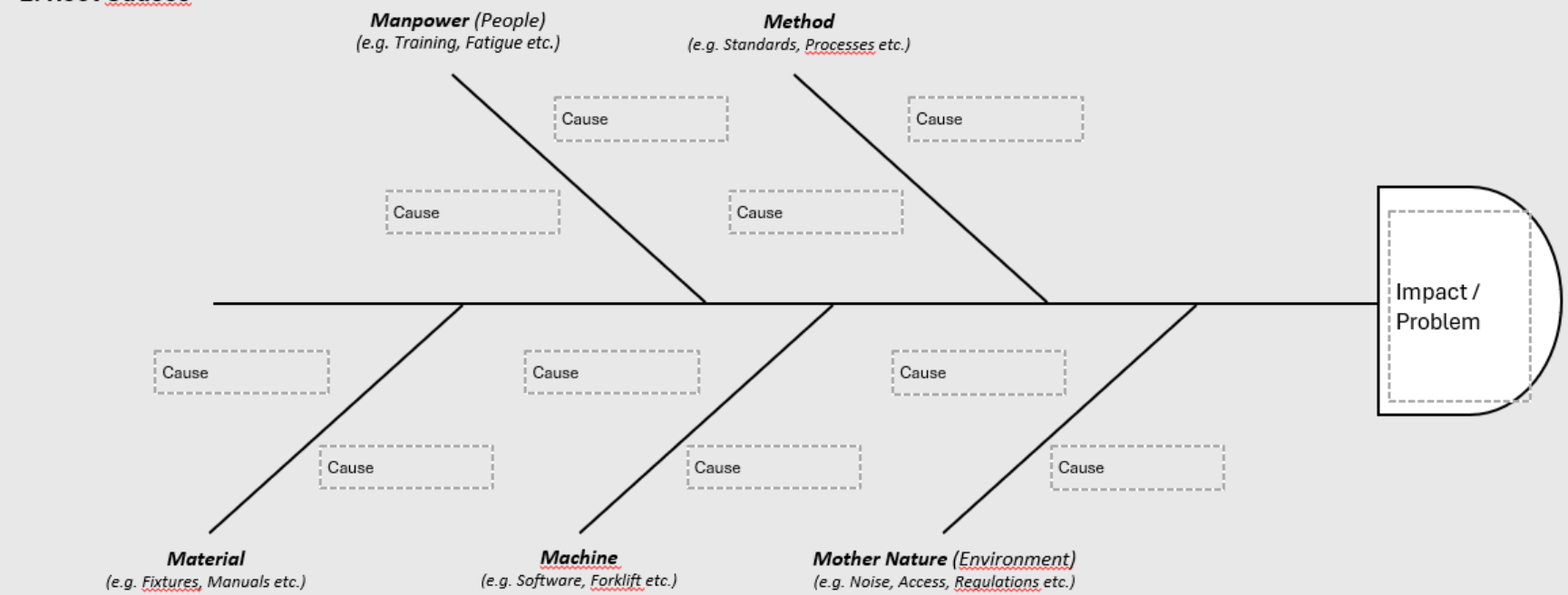
PSS Template

PSS	Team / Location:	Text hinzufügen	Topic:	Text hinzufügen	Date:	Text hinzufügen
Goal:	Text hinzufügen		Responsibility (Hat): Only 1 person	Text hinzufügen	Names:	Text hinzufügen

2. Root Causes



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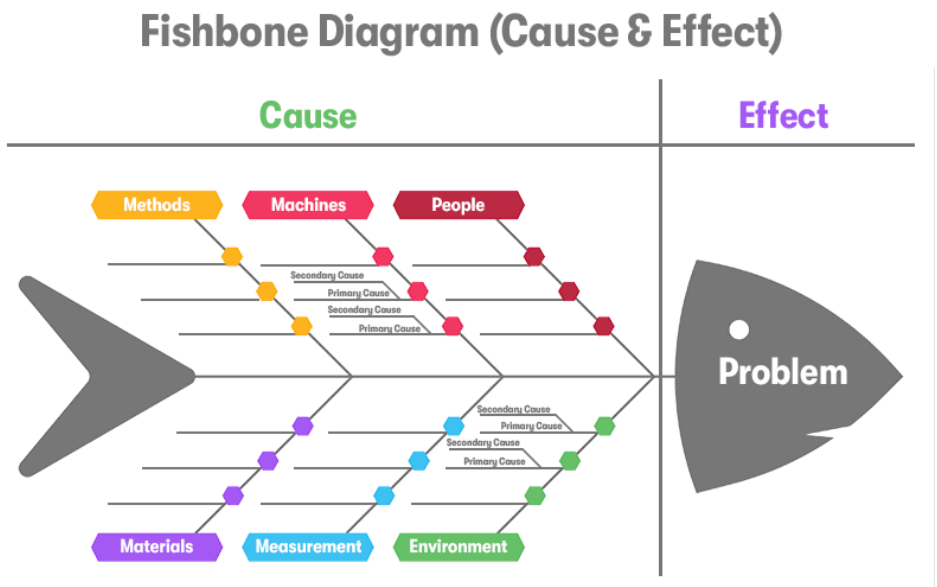
PSS Template → Ishikawa Diagram



A fishbone diagram (also known as an Ishikawa or cause-and-effect diagram) is a visual tool for systematic problem analysis. It helps teams to structure and identify potential causes of a problem.

The diagram shows the problem at the “head” of the fish, while the “bones” represent various categories of causes – e.g. people, methods, machines, materials, measurement and environment. These categories can be adjusted depending on the sector.

The tool promotes joint brainstorming and is often used in lean and quality management, such as in production, marketing or project management. This enables targeted solutions to be developed and processes to be improved.

Fishbone Diagram - Step 1

Fishbone Diagram - Step 2

Fishbone Diagram – Step 3

Choose the main cause categories that can contribute to the problem. Common categories are: methods, machines, people, materials, measurement and environment. Alternatively (IT), products, processes, people and partners can be used. These categories form the “bones” of the herringbone diagram.

Fishbone Diagram - Step 4

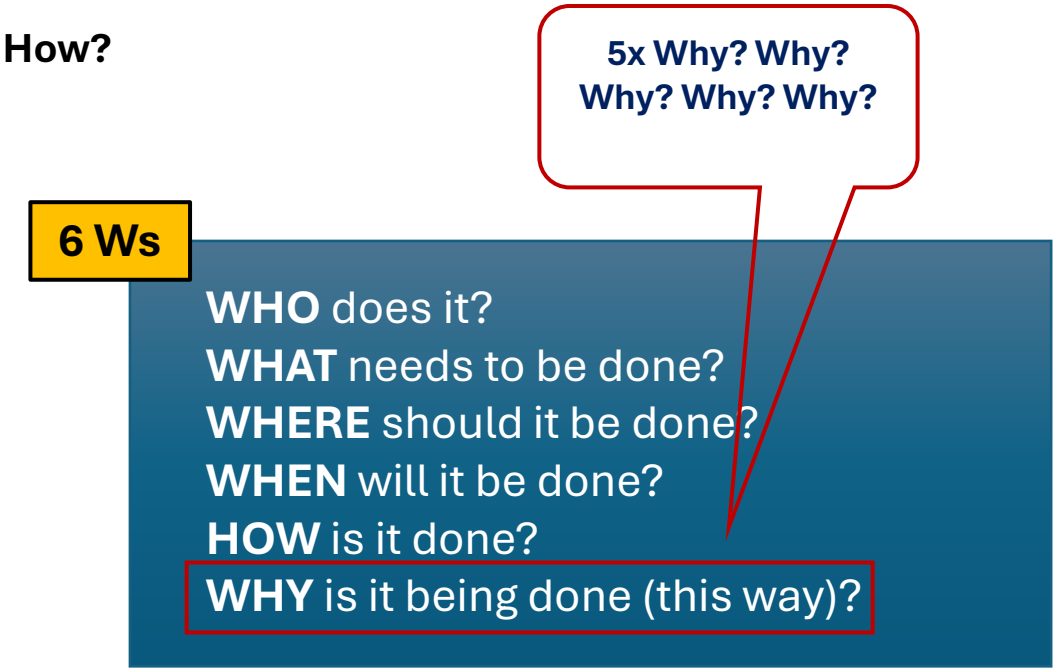
Fishbone Diagram - Step 5

PSS Template → 5x Why?

The six questions are based on: **Who? What? Where? When? Why (5x)? How?**

This may involve various questions:

- **Who** does it? Who's doing it now? Who should do it? Who else can do it? Who else should do it?
- **What** to do? What is being done? What should be done? What else can be done? What else needs to be done?
- **Where**: Where should it be done? Where will it be done? Where else can it be done? Where should it still be done?
- **When**: When will it be done? When will it really be done? When should it be done? When else can it be done? When do you still want to do it?



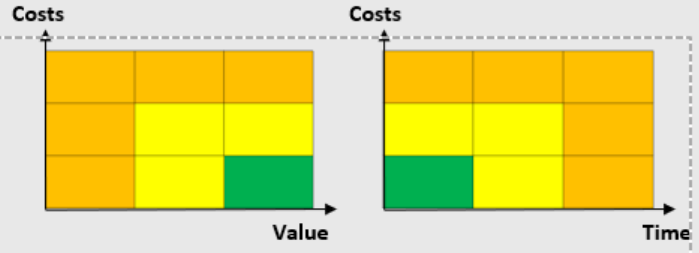
- **Why**: Why does he / she do it? Why should it be done? Why should it be done here? Why is it being done at this point? Why is this being done?
- **How**: According to the plan, how should it be done? How is it really done?

PSS Template

PSS	Team / Location:	Text hinzufügen	Topic:	Text hinzufügen	Date:	Text hinzufügen
Goal:	Text hinzufügen		Responsibility (Hat): Only 1 person	Text hinzufügen	Names:	Text hinzufügen

3.1 Solutions

•Text



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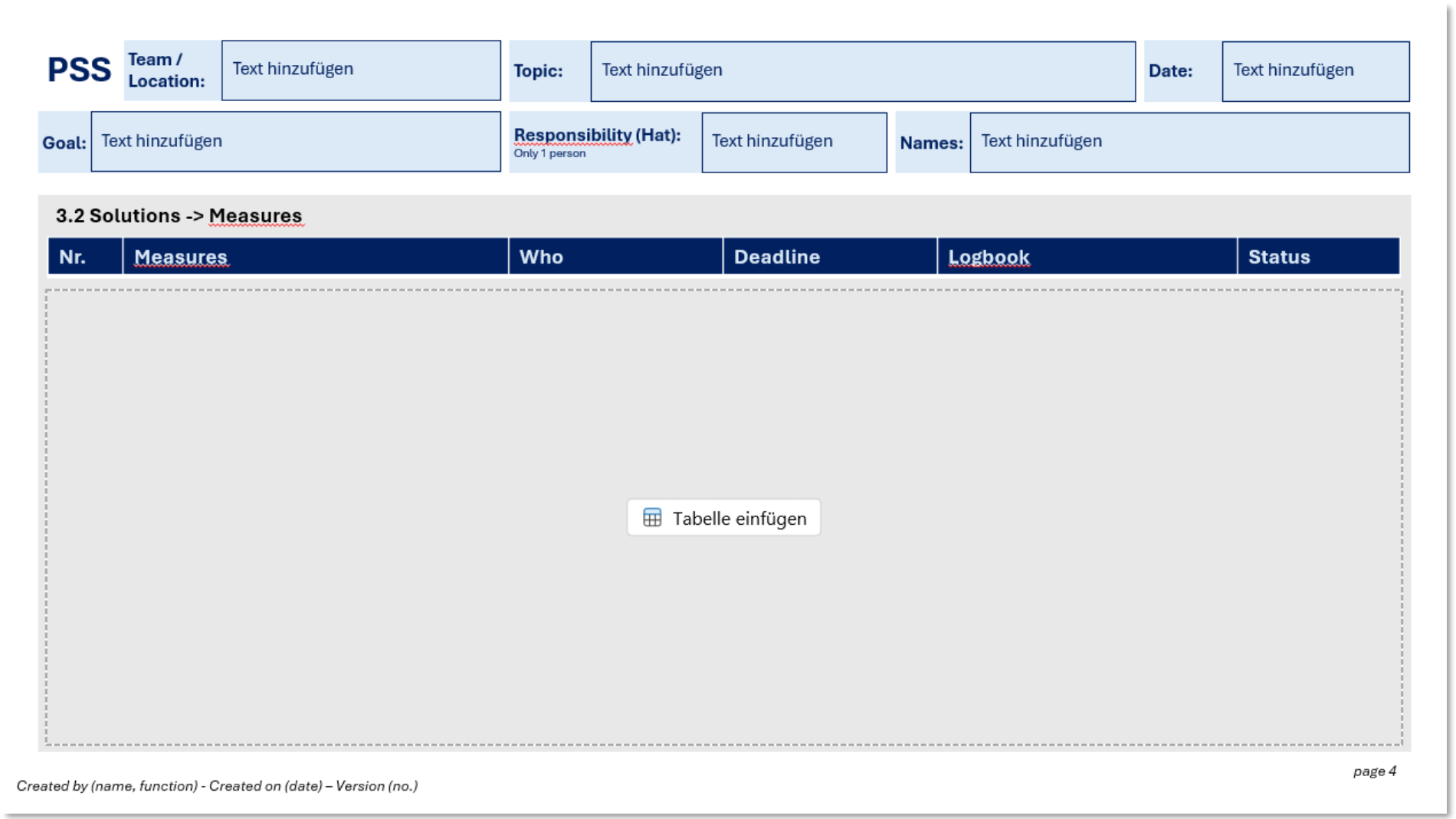

PSS	Team / Location:	Text hinzufügen	Topic:	Text hinzufügen	Date:	Text hinzufügen
Goal:	Text hinzufügen		Responsibility (Hat): Only 1 person	Text hinzufügen	Names:	Text hinzufügen

3.2 Solutions -> Measures

Nr.	Measures	Who	Deadline	Logbook	Status

Tabelle einfügen

page 4

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PSS Template

PSS	Team / Location:	Text hinzufügen	Topic:	Text hinzufügen	Date:	Text hinzufügen
Goal:	Text hinzufügen		Responsibility (Hat): Only 1 person	Text hinzufügen	Names:	Text hinzufügen

4. Solutions Check

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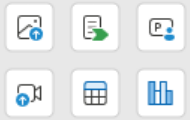

Savings (estimated)

☐ Min. per Workday Text hinzufügen

☐ CHF / EUR per Year Text hinzufügen

Degree of Achievement in %:	Text hinzufügen

page 5

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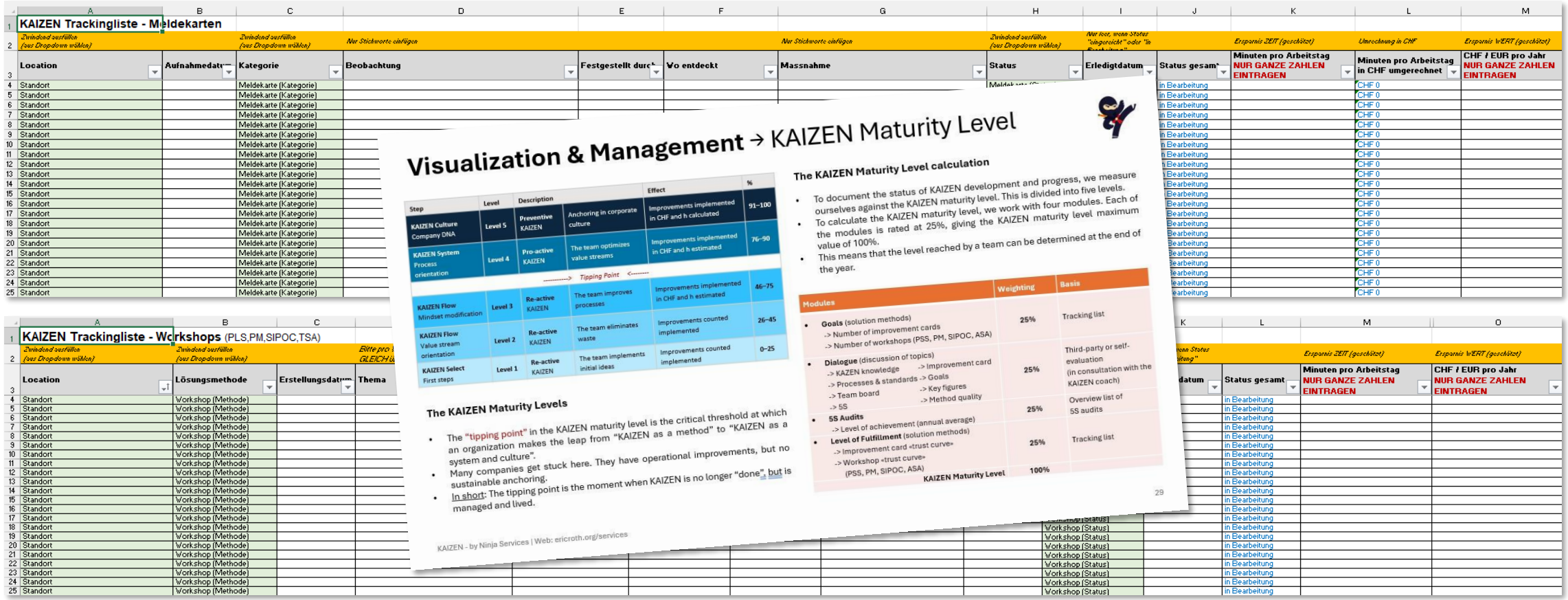
Tracking List

It is advisable to record the **improvement cards** as well as **measures from KAIZEN workshops** and also the results of **5S audits** in tracking lists and to always keep them up to date centrally. There are many reasons for this: a) It contributes to the calculation of the KAIZEN maturity level, b) It provides an overview and completeness, e.g. also for effectiveness monitoring, etc.



KAIZEN Trackingliste - Meldekarten

Location	Aufnahmedatum	Kategorie	Beobachtung	Festgestellt durch	Wo entdeckt	Massnahme	Status	Erledigtdatum	Status gesamt	Minuten pro Arbeitstag NUR GANZE ZAHLEN EINTRAGEN	Minuten pro Arbeitstag in CHF umgerechnet	CHF / EUR pro Jahr NUR GANZE ZAHLEN EINTRAGEN
Standort		Meldekarte (Kategorie)							in Bearbeitung		CHF 0	

KAIZEN Trackingliste - Workshops (PLS,PM,SIPOC,TSA)

Location	Lösungsmethode	Erstellungsdatum	Thema	Status gesamt	Minuten pro Arbeitstag NUR GANZE ZAHLEN EINTRAGEN	CHF / EUR pro Jahr NUR GANZE ZAHLEN EINTRAGEN
Standort	Workshop (Methode)			in Bearbeitung		

Visualization & Management → KAIZEN Maturity Level

Step	Level	Description		Effect	%
KAIZEN Culture Company DNA	Level 5	Preventive KAIZEN	Anchoring in corporate culture	Improvements implemented in CHF and h calculated	91–100
KAIZEN System Process orientation	Level 4	Pro-active KAIZEN	The team optimizes value streams	Improvements implemented in CHF and h estimated	76–90
			Tipping Point		
KAIZEN Flow Mindset modification	Level 3	Re-active KAIZEN	The team improves processes	Improvements implemented in CHF and h estimated	46–75
KAIZEN Flow Value stream orientation	Level 2	Re-active KAIZEN	The team eliminates waste	Improvements counted implemented	26–45
KAIZEN Select First steps	Level 1	Re-active KAIZEN	The team implements initial ideas	Improvements counted implemented	0–25

The KAIZEN Maturity Levels

- The "tipping point" in the KAIZEN maturity level is the critical threshold at which an organization makes the leap from "KAIZEN as a method" to "KAIZEN as a system and culture".
- Many companies get stuck here. They have operational improvements, but no sustainable anchoring.
- In short: The tipping point is the moment when KAIZEN is no longer "done", but is managed and lived.

The KAIZEN Maturity Level calculation

- To document the status of KAIZEN development and progress, we measure ourselves against the KAIZEN maturity level. This is divided into five levels.
- To calculate the KAIZEN maturity level, we work with four modules. Each of the modules is rated at 25%, giving the KAIZEN maturity level maximum value of 100%.
- This means that the level reached by a team can be determined at the end of the year.

Modules	Weighting	Basis
Goals (solution methods) -> Number of improvement cards -> Number of workshops (PSS, PM, SIPOC, ASA)	25%	Tracking list
Dialogue (discussion of topics) -> KAIZEN knowledge -> Improvement card -> Processes & standards -> Goals -> Team board -> Key figures -> 5S -> Method quality	25%	Third-party or self-evaluation (in consultation with the KAIZEN coach)
5S Audits -> Level of achievement (annual average)	25%	Overview list of 5S audits
Level of Fulfillment (solution methods) -> Improvement card «trust curve» -> Workshop «trust curve» (PSS, PM, SIPOC, ASA)	25%	Tracking list
KAIZEN Maturity Level	100%	

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29

KAIZEN
Communication

- **Communication**
  - **Conflict Management**

Communication → Conflict Management

Conflicts are part of further development

Change creates friction. Where transparency increases or working methods change, tensions arise. A professional approach to conflict management is therefore crucial for implementing improvements / transformations in a stable and sustainable way.

Typical forms of conflict

Type of Conflict	Description
Conflicting goals	Conflicting goals hinder cooperation
Evaluation conflict	Differing opinions, values, and norms lead to disagreement.
Distribution conflict	Dispute over resources such as time, money, tasks
Relationship conflict	Personal hurt, misunderstandings, lack of appreciation
Role conflict	Unclear responsibilities, hidden power struggles
Power struggle	Competitive behavior towards superiors or colleagues
Value conflict	No common ground for viewpoints, moral tensions

Why are conflicts so difficult?

- Emotional tensions often operate beneath the surface.
- Objective solutions are ineffective when dealing with personal injuries.
- Lack of communication exacerbates the dynamics

Dealing with conflicts

- Recognize and name conflicts early on
- Treat the causes, not the symptoms.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Use moderation or external support

Communication Share	Description	Influence
Body language	Gestures, mimics, breathing, clothing	> **50%**
Voice	Quiet, loud, listless	> **30%**
Factual statement	Message content	< 20%
Gestures and facial expressions significantly influence the effect of feedback! **→ Nonverbal communication = 80%**		

« It's the tone that makes the music »
« What goes around comes around »

Questions & Answers