

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? DEFINING THE ISSUE FOR THE CUSTOMER

DETAILS

- **ESTIMATED TIME:** 45-60 Minutes
- **DELIVERY MODE:** Trainer-Guided Discussion + Inspection Findings Exercise
- **FACILITATOR:** General Manager or Designated Individual

VTM MATERIALS

- Trainier Activity Guide
- What's the Problem Worksheet

TRAINER'S ACTIONS & CHECKLIST

- ☐ Use the trainer activity guide to:
 - ☐ Lead a discussion on what makes a problem "real" to the customer
 - ☐ Provide inspection findings for the worksheet activities
 - ☐ Guide team members in defining:
 - ▶ The problem
 - ▶ The consequences
 - ☐ Facilitate group feedback and discussion
- ☐ Ensure all team members actively participate
- ☐ Reinforce clarity, urgency, and simplicity throughout

FEEDBACK, VERIFYING, & ASSESSING

- **Trainer Review:** Provide feedback on clarity, urgency, and simplicity of explanations.
- **Group Reflection:** Encourage team members to share insights using prompts such as:
 - ▶ *What made that explanation clear or unclear to a customer?*
 - ▶ *What is one adjustment you will apply to improve your explanation?*

- ★ The trainer provides the findings: team members define the problem and its impact. Have those ready to go!!
- ★ Customers act on problems they understand, not just what they're told
- ★ Avoid "science talk. Keep explanations simple and relatable
- ★ Every problem must connect to a consequence.

Getting Started & What To Do

General Notes

- This activity focuses on helping team members:
 - ▶ Define problems clearly using inspection findings
 - ▶ Connect findings to real-world impact
 - ▶ Communicate urgency in a customer-friendly way
- This is a **trainer-guided activity**:
 - ▶ The trainer provides the findings
 - ▶ Team members define:
 - ◇ The problem
 - ◇ The consequences
- This is a **discussion and practice-based activity**, not a role-play
- All team members participate by:
 - ▶ Writing responses
 - ▶ Sharing explanations
 - ▶ Providing feedback
- Reinforce:
 - ▶ Clarity
 - ▶ Simplicity
 - ▶ Logical structure

Time Guidance

- Discussion: 5–7 minutes
- Structured practice: 10–15 minutes
- Findings exercise rounds: 15–20 minutes
- Wrap-up: 8–10 minutes

During the Activity

- Observe how well team members:
 - ▶ Turn findings into clear problems
 - ▶ Avoid technical jargon
 - ▶ Explain consequences effectively
- Identify patterns to reinforce during discussion

After Each Exercise

- Have team members share:
 - ▶ What worked well
 - ▶ What could be improved
 - ▶ One adjustment for next time

Step-by-Step Delivery

Step 1: Trainer Lead Discussion — What Makes a Problem “Real”?

Time: 5-8 minutes

Purpose: Build understanding of how customers perceive urgency

Key Points to Cover

- Customers act on perceived risk and urgency, not technical detail
- Customers ignore problems when:
 - ▶ They don't understand them
 - ▶ They seem minor or unclear
- Common Mistakes
 - ▶ Overusing technical jargon
 - ▶ Being vague
 - ▶ Not explaining consequences
- Demonstrate a good vs. poor explanation (Critical)
 - ▶ Examples:
 - ◇ **Poor Example:** *You have subterranean termites in the soil.*
 - ◇ **Good Example:** *Your home has active termite activity underground, which means they are feeding on the wooden structure. If left untreated, they can cause costly damage to your home's foundation.*
 - ▶ Emphasizing Urgent vs. Long-Term Issues:
 - ◇ **Urgent Example:** Active moisture in a termite-prone area (requires immediate treatment).
 - ◇ **Long-Term Risk Example:** A potential pest entry point that could lead to future infestation (should be addressed preventively).
 - ▶ Using Graphs & Visual Aids for Credibility:
 - ◇ Demonstrate how to use a property graph or inspection documentation to reinforce findings.
 - *Here's where we found termite activity, and this documentation helps us track the progression of damage.*
- Example Discussion Prompts
 - ▶ What makes the second explanation stronger?
 - ▶ When have you seen customers not take something seriously?

Step 2: Structured Practice — Findings → Problem → Consequences

Time: 10-15 minutes

Purpose: Teach a repeatable explanation framework.

Worksheet Activity

- ▶ Have Team members complete Exercise 1 on the worksheet.
 - ◇ You can:

- Have them do it on their own,
- or you can do it as a group.
- ▶ Afterward, review their work and facilitate a discussion using the following guiding questions.
 - ◇ *What do you think makes customers more likely to act?*
 - ◇ *Have you ever had a customer who didn't seem concerned? Why do you think that was?*
 - ◇ *Was the explanation you (we) came up with:*
 - *clear? Why or why not?*
 - *create urgency? Why or why not?*
 - *simple and easy to understand? Why or why not?*

Step 3: Introduce the Findings → Problem → Consequences Explanation Structure

Time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Learn and apply the framework in real time

Explain the Framework

- Introduce the Findings → Problem → Consequences Explanation structure, explaining how each component helps clarify and create urgency for the customer
 - ▶ **Findings:** What we observed.
 - ▶ **Problem:** Why it's an issue.
 - ▶ **Consequences:** What happens if left untreated.

Worksheet Activity

- Present three real-world customer problems (one pest, one termite, one lawn) to the trainee.
 - ▶ Have the team members use Exercise 2 on their worksheet to practice following the structure
 - ◇ **Have them do this individually, then call on team members to share their work**
 - ▶ Things for you and your team to observe & discuss after sharing:
 - What made each explanation strong or weak?
 - How did they establish urgency?
 - Did their explanation avoid using too much technical jargon?
 - ◇ Example questions to ask the trainee to help them refine their approach:
 - *How would you improve your explanation?*
 - *What customer concerns might come up?*
 - *How would you respond to skepticism?*
 - ◇ Reinforce key concepts: Clarity, Urgency, Simplicity.

Step 4: Final Reflection Discussion & Activity Wrap Up

Time: 8–10 minutes

Purpose: Reinforce learning and field application

Group Discussion

- Review:
 - ▶ Strong examples of clear explanations
 - ▶ Common overcomplications
 - ▶ What made problems feel real and urgent

Team Member Reflection, ask:

- *What part of your explanation worked best?*
- *Where did you lose clarity or overcomplicate?*
- *What will you do differently in your next customer conversation?*

Trainer Close:**Reinforce**

- Clarity builds trust
- Simplicity improves understanding
- Consequences drive action

“If the customer doesn’t understand the problem, they won’t act on the solution.”

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WORKSHEET

Exercise 1: What Makes a Problem 'Real' to the Customer?

Instructions: Think about why customers act on certain problems but ignore others. Complete the questions below and discuss with your team.

1. Write down two reasons why a customer might not take action even when they have a pest, termite, or lawn issue.
2. Why might customers ignore or downplay a problem?
3. How can you explain a problem in a way that makes the customer feel urgency?

Exercise 2: Findings → Problem → Consequences

Instructions: Using the findings provided, complete each section by clearly defining the problem and explaining the consequences. Focus on making your explanation simple, logical, and easy for a customer to understand.

The Framework

- **Findings:** What was observed?
- **Problem:** Why is this an issue?
- **Consequences:** What happens if left untreated?

Example Problem – Pest

- **Findings:** Evidence of termite activity near the foundation.
- **Problem:** Termites weaken wood, compromising structural integrity.
- **Consequences:** If untreated, damage can escalate into costly repairs.

Your Turn:

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WORKSHEET

1. Pest Problem

- Findings:
- Problem:
- Consequence:

2. Lawn Problem

- Findings:
- Problem:
- Consequence:

3. Mosquito Problem

- Findings:
- Problem:
- Consequence: