How Leadership Styles Impact Employee Productivity

Driving engagement, buy-in, and collaboration across generational and cultural boundaries is critical to success in a VUCA world, and it is one of my professional areas of practice. The difference a change or adaptation in leadership style can make is profound on a multiplicity of levels that impact performance, collaboration, and accountability.

Enjoy this guest post by Jen McKenzie on the importance of leadership styles.

People grossly underestimate all that's
involved with being a successful business owner. Every moving part of a company
ultimately falls on you. That's a lot of pressure to deal with.

Without good employees, it's impossible
to achieve anything. If you needed to prioritize the elements
that make an
employee good for your business, productivity might fall at
the top of the
list.

The productivity of an employee is their
ability to use their time wisely, produce work efficiently and
be reliable. If
an employee commits to improving their ability so they can get
results, they're
a productive member of the team you'll want to
keep around.

The productivity of your employees impacts
your bottom line.

Many leaders don't realize this, but your
leadership style directly impacts your employees and their
ability to be
productive.

Consider the following leadership styles
and ways you can improve within the style that suits your
personality.

Authoritarian Leadership

If your leadership style is
authoritarian, **you work best by yourself**.
You see yourself as the point person for the job.

You are fully aware of your team, but you
see them as the ones who carry out the orders you give.

The Positive Aspects of an Authoritarian Leader

One of the most obvious benefits of being an authoritarian is that your **employees don't have to guess where you stand on an issue**. You'll make it very clear how you feel about a specific strategy.

Plus, they won't have to worry about what your end goal is. If you want your employees to do a specific task a certain way, you'll definitely let them know.

So many employees are tortured by the guessing game their employers seem to play because neither party is clear on what the goal is.

The Negative Aspects of an Authoritarian Leader

Unfortunately, an authoritarian leader has great potential to be a micromanager.

Micromanagement can really stifle an employee's ability to be creative and innovative. Because an authoritarian leader knows what they want, they **won't budge or be open to other suggestions or conversations**.

Even in a setting where there is a clear distinction between the employer and the employee, many employees don't enjoy feeling like they're in a work environment where they know their opinions don't really matter in the grand scheme of it all.

An Authoritative Solution

If this is your leadership style, **feedback is important**. You need to know
more about the experiences and situations your employees are facing because of
the work they're doing for your company.

*If
an employee sees a more efficient way of doing something, it will only help your
brand in the long run.*

Receive feedback, check your ego at the door and be open to conversations that lead to necessary change.

Democratic Leadership

When people think of a democracy, they
think of government constructs. However, this is also a leadership style.

In similar form, a **democratic leader really doesn't have any say**. They leave it
completely up to the people to decide for how the company will operate.

The Positive Aspects of Democratic Leadership

A democratic leadership style shows you
are **open to the perspectives, opinions,
and desires of your employees**.

Some might argue that a democratic style
is the best one because the decision is made by the people in your
organization. You're not a dictator by any means.

The Negative Aspects of Democratic Leadership

In a lot of ways, democratic leadership
leaves you at the mercy of your employees.

Even if a leader is strong with clear
opinions, they won't give directives. As a result, this **can lead to a sense of inconsistency within the company**.

As employees change their minds and feel
differently about different experiences or goals, the company will shift.
Still, the consequences will hit you first since you're the leader.

Studies suggest that economic instability can directly threaten the
construct of democracy.

If this is true for a country, imagine
how much more applicable it can be to a small business.

A Democratic Solution

Take a note from both participative and
authoritative styles of leadership.

It's okay to receive the suggestions of
your employees. Create an ongoing dialogue.

However, **develop a strong stance and a clear vision** that you're not afraid
to implement.

Participative Leadership

Participative leadership is probably **the healthiest approach to leadership**.

It leaves room for conversation and dialogue from the employees. The leader gives clear directives. However, the leader is still open to the participation of the employees within the decision-making process.

This leader takes their opinions into consideration when it's time to make major decisions. Lean leaders change the workplace and business operations.

This was the case with Toyota and its use to Kaizen. Toyota has found that **valuing employee feedback** leads not just to better employee productivity, but leaner and better operations.

Your employees know exactly how day-to-day operations are functioning since they are the ones doing them.

Never forget that they are experts in their fields so treat them as such.

The healthiest part of this process is that the employees feel like they can play a role in making the company an amazing one. When you have purpose-driven employees, you'll be able to experience growth and productivity in dynamic ways.

Why Leadership Improvement is Imperative

There are lots of opinions regarding leadership styles and which work the best. However, for your company, make productivity a major priority.

When you're able to **adjust your leadership style to facilitate maximum productivity** from your employees, you'll be setting your company up for success.

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Do you want to drive greater engagement, buy-in, and success? Inspire greatness?

Contact **_irene@justcoachit.com_** to learn how we can help.

Author Bio

Jen McKenzie is an independent business consultant from New York. She writes extensively on business, education and human resource topics. When Jennifer is not at her desk working, you can usually find her hiking or taking a road trip with her two dogs. You can reach Jennifer @jenmcknzie
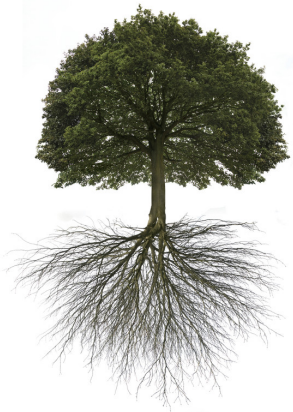
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Grit, Growth & Greatness in Disruptive Times

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The Easy Guide to Root Cause Analysis for Efficient Business Problem-Solving

By: Amanda Athuraliya

Sometimes things go wrong. Well-planned projects fail, processes break down and employees lose their productivity.

To understand what happened, you need to get to the bottom of things.

Many organizations use the root cause analysis when a problem or something unplanned happens that will interrupt their business processes. It helps dig deeper and find effective solutions.

In this post, we will look at what is root cause analysis, the root cause analysis steps, and root cause analysis tools.

What is Root Cause Analysis

Root cause analysis is a method that helps understand the

primary cause of a problem or why a problem occurred in the first place.

It helps you to dig into the underlying causes of the situation, thus allowing you to find appropriate solutions for it.

There are several root cause analysis tools and techniques that can be used in the investigation of a problem. But before we get to that, let's understand how to conduct a root cause analysis first.

Root Cause Analysis Steps

A root cause analysis may take several hours of your time.

It would be easier for you if you involve a team of relevant people; for example, if you are investigating bottlenecks in a process, it would help to have the process owner and other experts for the analysis.

Follow the steps below to conduct a successful root cause analysis.

Step 1: Define the problem your organization is facing and gather data and evidence relevant to it and necessary to understand the current situation.

Create a problem statement which should include information about the problem like the actual impact, potential impact, the focal point, etc. However keep the statement concise.

Step 2: Determine the factors that caused the problem. Gather a team of people directly involved in the execution of the process and corrective actions, and experts whose input can help find solutions faster.

Together with the team, brainstorm the possible factors for the problem by asking 'why?'. You can use a 5 whys diagram or a fishbone diagram here.

Step 3: Identify the root cause. Did deeper by continuing to ask why after the first layer of causal factors. Keep at it until finally you have discovered the fundamental cause for the problem at hand.

Step 4: Decide the corrective actions you need to take to eliminate the problem and prevent it from recurring. Make sure that you clearly communicate them to the people who will be involved.

Step 5: Review and evaluate the impact of the corrective actions. Make improvements as necessary.

Root Cause Analysis Tools

Many root cause analysis tools are out there. Following we have listed some that are widely used and more effective in problem-solving.
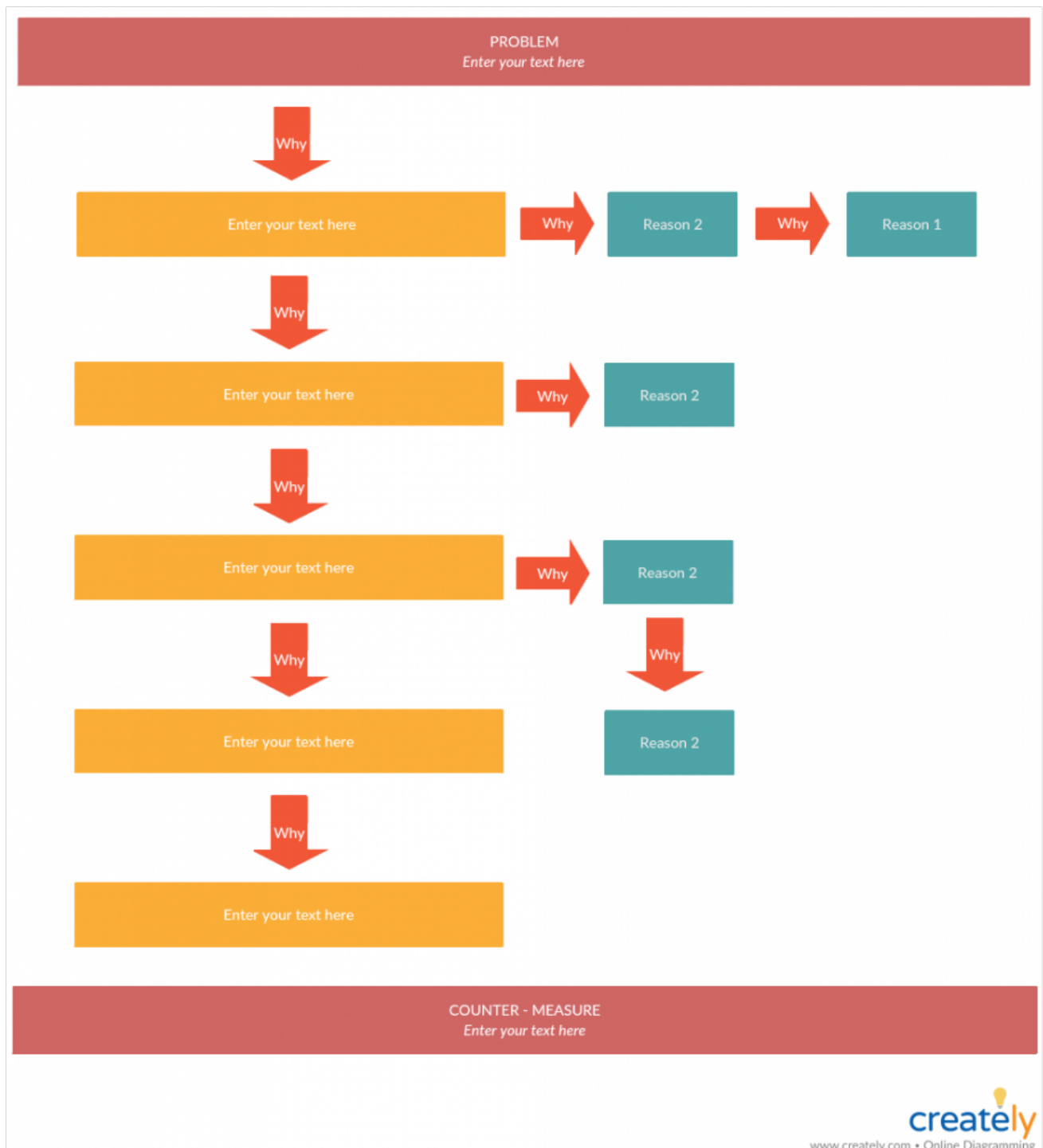
5 Whys Analysis

As the name suggests, in the 5 whys analysis the question 'why?' is asked five times in the course of finding the root cause of a problem.

To carry out a 5 whys analysis, you need to gather a team of people who are affected by the problem.

You can use a 5 whys template like the one below to facilitate the brainstorming session.

Once you have asked 'why' five times and figured out the root cause, come up with improvement measure you need to apply. Assign everyone the corrective actions that need to be taken.

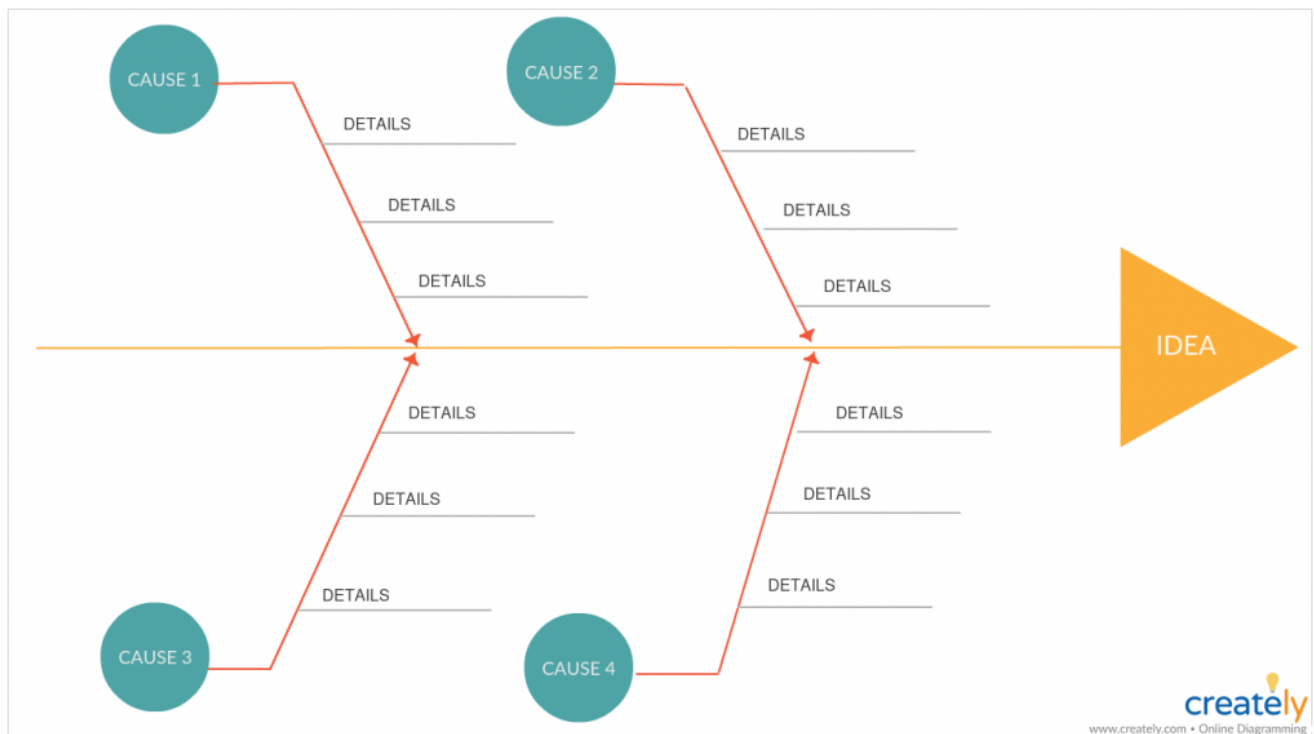5 Whys Analysis (Click on the template to edit it online)

Cause and Effect Analysis

Once you have identified the problem, you can use the cause and effect analysis to explore the causes of a problem and its effects.

For the analysis, you can use a cause and effect diagram, which is also known as a fishbone diagram or the Ishikawa

diagram.

Just as it helps explore the factors that are preventing an outcome, it can also be used to identify the factors needed to generate the desired outcome.

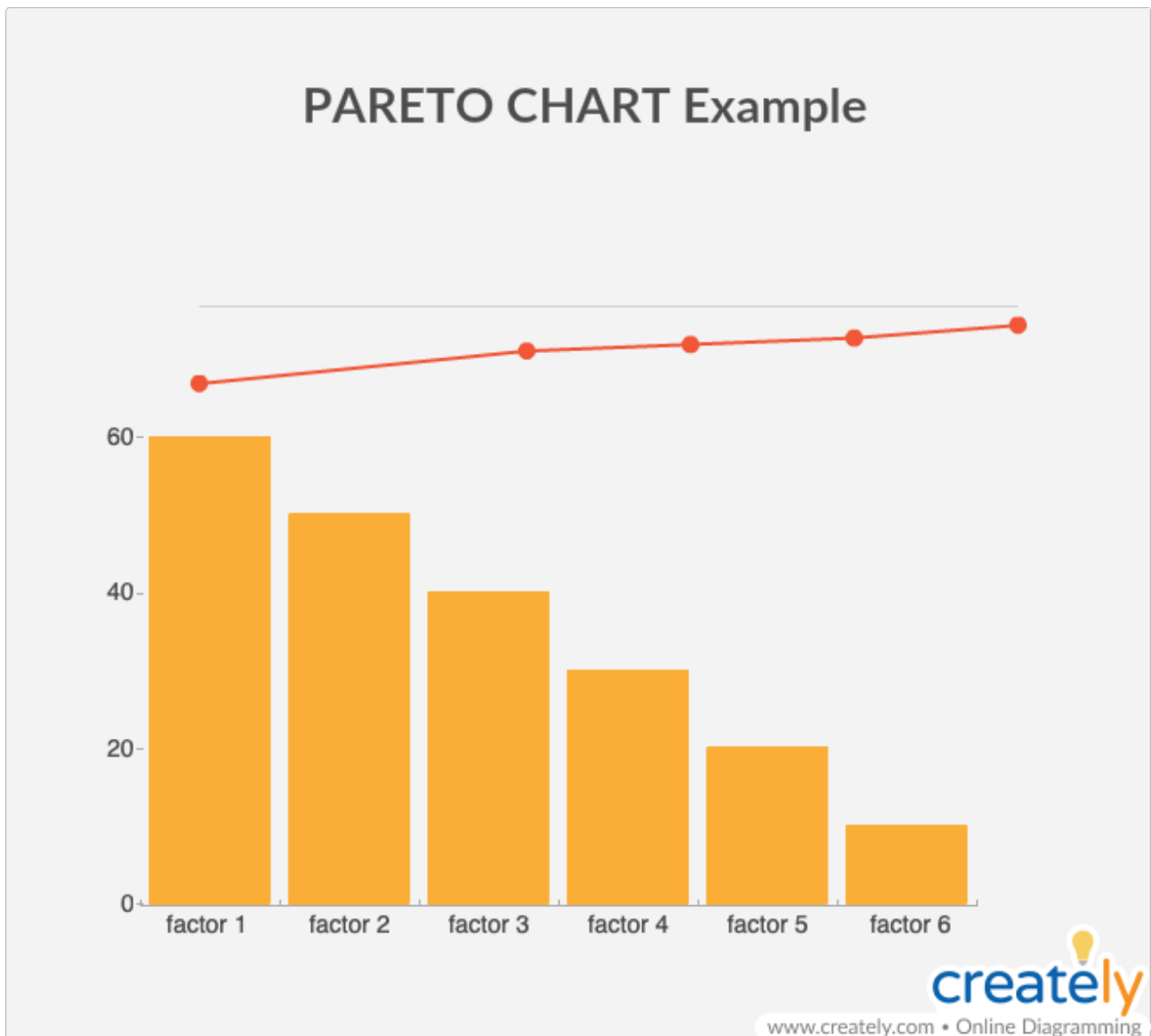Fishbone Diagram (Click on the template to edit it online)
Here's how to use the cause and effect analysis to solve business problems. You can also refer to our guide on fishbone diagrams to learn how to use the tool in more detail.

Pareto Chart

Pareto chart is a combination of a bar chart and a line graph. While the length of the bars represent the frequency or cost of faults, they are arranged in such a way that highlights the most frequent to least frequent. The chart helps prioritize your issues based on the cumulative effect they have on a system.

The Pareto chart is based on the theory that 80% of the total problems that occur are caused by 20% of problem causes. This means if you have solutions to your major problems, you can also solve a majority of your other smaller problems.

Learn how to create a Pareto chart step-by-step here.

Pareto Chart Example (Click on the template to edit it online)

Scatter Diagram

Scatter diagrams or scatter plot diagrams can be used to visualize the relationship between two variables. Once you have created a cause and effect diagram and identified potential causes to your problem, you can use the scatter diagram to determine which causes are responsible for the variation.

While the independent variable is plotted along the horizontal axis, the vertical axis is for the dependent axis. Learn
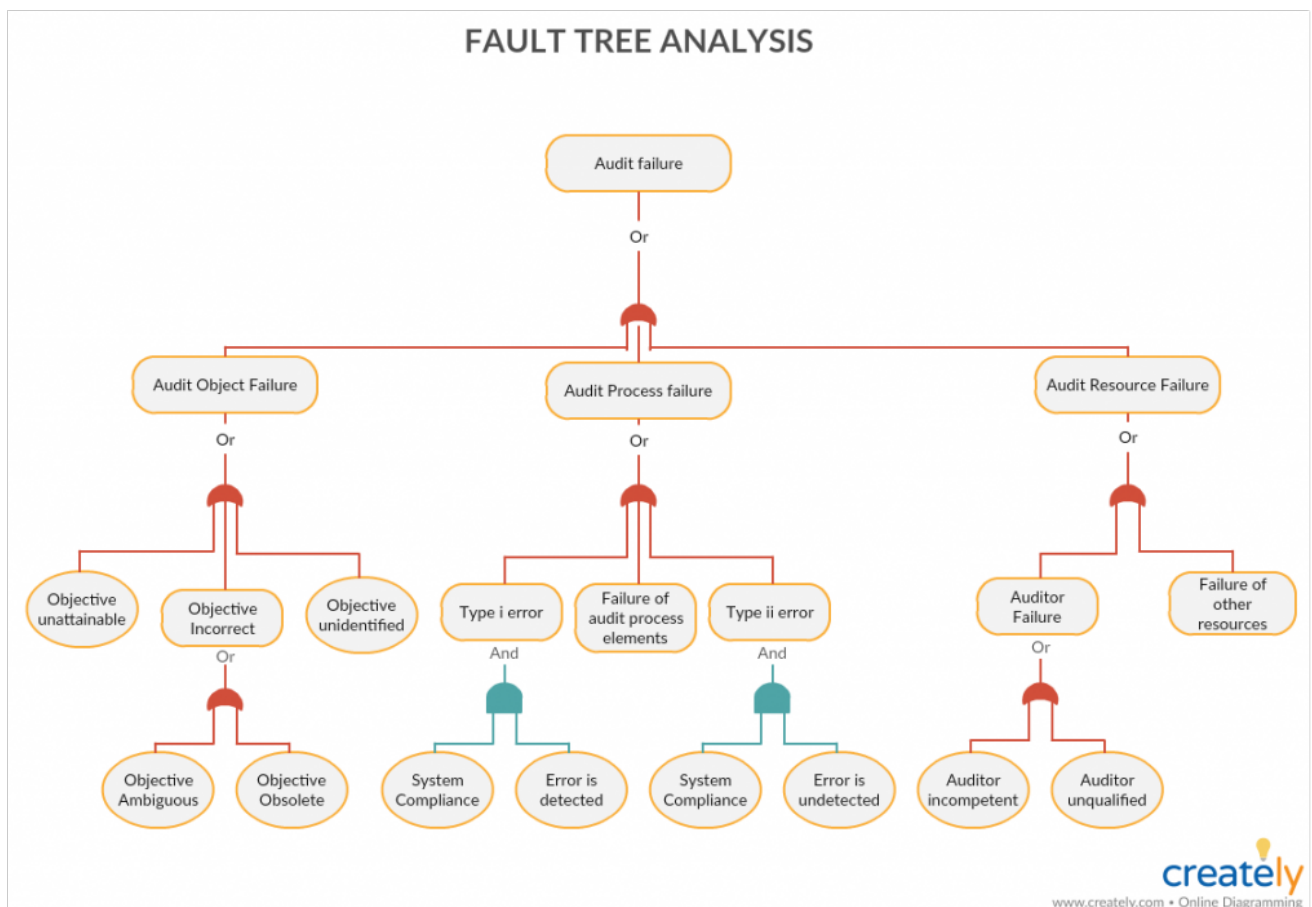
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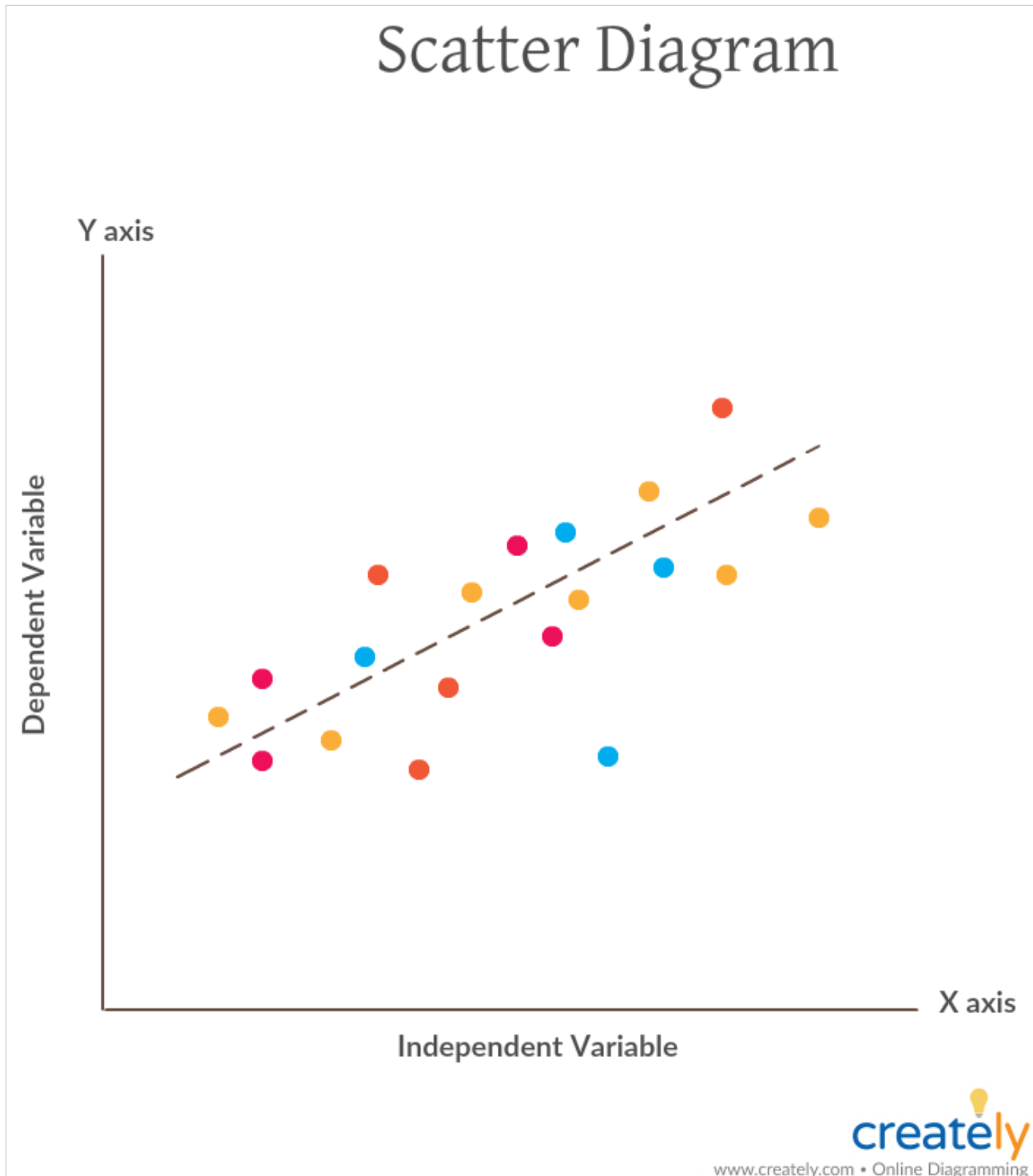
Scatter Diagram Example (Click on the diagram to edit it online)

Fault Tree Analysis

Fault tree analysis is a deductive analysis to that visually represent the failure path. You can use the fault tree

analysis to determine the possible causes of a problem or an event. The fault tree starts with the event at the top and the possible causes are placed below.

Fault Tree Analysis (Click on the template to edit it online)

Anymore Root Cause Analysis Tools?

What other root cause analysis tools do you use? Have you got any more tips on accelerating the root cause analysis steps we have discussed above? Do share them with us in the comments below.

root cause analysisroot cause analysis processroot cause analysis stepsroot cause analysis templatesroot cause analysis toolswhat is root cause analysis

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How to Build Your Personal and Business Edge at the Speed of Change-Part 2

Photo Image: Big Stock Photos
How can you build and sustain the courage, consistency of purpose, adaptability, resiliency you need to succeed? How can you light the fire of human imagination, creativity, and collaboration?

Transforming change challenges even failures into levers for our greatest purpose, potential, collaboration; our best

personal and business results is what my 3Q work is all about. *Click to read Part 1*

Success means stretching out of the comfort zone to develop a new relationship with change and uncertainty that helps you self actualize and inspires others to do the same.

Our ability to rewrite default habits of thinking, doing and communicating, to re-write our brains is scientifically proven, and can only be achieved by taking small, powerful, consistent steps forward; steps that help us think, execute and communicate differently and better than in the past.

3Q Coaching and Consulting: 3 Key Strengths for Success in Disruptive Times

Q1 IQ	**Thinking Differently:** Solution Focused Problem Solving Possibility Thinking | Using challenges and mistakes to fail forward **Priming Your Brain:** Accelerate Learning-Re-learning Simplification of the Complex | Optimization of Time/Ability
Q2: EQ	**Feeling Differently:** Self-Awareness and Management, Empowerment, Effective Communication Across Internal/External Boundaries **Priming Yourself**: Using change/challenges as a lever for Resiliency, Emotional, and Social Adaptability, Greater Happiness
Q3:SQ	**Leading mindfully:** The development of the intrinsic motivators, timeless values, and purpose that drive/sustain great leadership. **Priming Yourself:** Developing a new relationship with change and challenges that strengthens Q3 as well as Q1 developing a more open mindset and strengthening the right brain.

How can you develop your 3Q Edge? Browse the blog, check out our latest programs and stay tuned for Part 3 of this series, simple exercises to build each Q!