

Using the Attached Worksheet: “Describing Your Approach to a Real-World Problem”

Recommended Use:

- This worksheet is designed for situations in which students have not received any particular training in a problem solving process. The worksheet guides students to describe the process they used.
- Have students fill out this worksheet to describe a problem from real-world experiences, such as *internships, service-learning, clinical practice, and so on*.
- Ask students to pick a problem they encountered in their real-world experience and then complete the worksheet for that problem. The instructions on the first page of the worksheet should be modified for the student setting.
- Faculty should review the worksheet to gain an understanding of how students address problems. In most cases, weaknesses in the early items (i.e., items B and C) will lead to weaknesses in the later items on the worksheet.
- Once student weaknesses are identified, educational activities can be designed to help students develop better problem solving skills. The items on the worksheet (B through G) are organized from least complex skills to most complex skills. To increase the likelihood that students will develop desired skills, educational activities should focus first on the least complex skills in which student weaknesses are identified.

Alternative Use:

- This worksheet could also be used in conjunction with student experiences when working in teams with other students. Students could be asked to identify a problem related to their *teamwork*.

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Describing Your Approach to a Real-World Problem, Page 1 Name: _____

One of the skills of a professional is self-regulation, which is sometimes referred to as "life-long learning." One of the best ways to begin self-regulation is to reflect on ways that you have addressed problems in the past. This self-evaluation form is designed to help you do this. Once you understand how you typically address problems, you can begin to consider ways to improve your approaches to future problems.

Before filling out this worksheet, choose either a medical problem or a personnel/teamwork problem that you have encountered in your clinical experience.

A. Describing the Problem and Solution

Briefly describe the problem, the circumstances, and your solution:

B. Recognition of Alternative Solutions and Uncertainties

Briefly describe the possible solutions that you considered:

What uncertainties are there about this problem? Why might there be disagreement about the best solution?

C. Use of Relevant Information in Addressing the Problem

List relevant information that you used in addressing the problem:

D. Interpretations of Information

Did you think about how different people could see information related to this problem in different ways? Give an example:

E. Use of Guidelines or Principles to Judge Across the Various Options

Can you explain how you decided what factors were most important in solving this problem? Give an example.

In coming to your solution, did you carefully consider more than one opinion or solution? Explain.

F. Communication

Did you communicate the problem or your solution to anyone? If so, briefly explain:

G. Learning from Past Experience

What did you learn from your experience with this problem?

If you encounter a similar problem in the future, would you address it the same way? Why or why not?