

Bernie Sander

PiT-Stop[®]



**Problem Finding, Structuring and Solving
in Teams – a facilitated idea generation
methodology.**



Welcome to PiT-Stop – the systematic method for generating ideas and solving problems in teams. Here you will experience how PiT-Stop works. Let yourself be inspired to hold a PiT-Stop workshop in your organization. You will be excited. Guaranteed!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernie Sander', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bernie Sander

»Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.« *Albert Einstein*

Why PiT-Stop is unbeatable

- PiT-Stop unlocks the hidden potential in the minds of your employees
- PiT-Stop invites identification with the organization and motivates your employees
- PiT-Stop is unequivocally process-oriented and reality-tested many times over
- PiT-Stop offers an immediate Return on Investment and Return on Process
- PiT-Stop functions in ALL organizations, sectors and departments
- PiT-Stop guarantees results and benefits
- We are excited by PiT-Stop – we invite you to also be so inspired!

»Problems are a free consultation.« *Bernie Sander*

7 Reasons for PiT-Stop

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PiT-Stop stands for problem finding and problem solving in teams

As in PiT-Stops during Formula One races, problems are identified by the drivers (employees) and quickly reported. To stay in the race, these problems need to be addressed. The name PiT-Stop also stands symbolically for the speed of the process – problems are brought to light, visualized and clustered. Decision-making and problem-solving follow in short order.

PiT-Stop is a fascinating way to tap into the ideas. In the end everyone profits - employees as well as management. Let yourself be inspired through our enthusiasm and please read more in this Infolip.

»The true secret of success lies in enthusiasm.«

Walter Chrysler

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From the Kaizen Philosophy

- Go to GEMBA (Place of Work)
For us that means: moving away from the dependency on 'ideas must be delivered' to the active getting of problems and ideas from employees.
- Seek MUDA (Waste)
For us that means: Creating awareness of the 'waste' in daily business.
- Make KAIZEN (Improving the Good)
For us that means: Keeping the improvement process in action.

PiT-Stop makes these good intentions easy to apply!

What does PiT-Stop deliver?

- Involvement
- Motivation
- Process Optimization
- Savings Potential
- Social Competence
- Goal Achievement
- Knowledge Transfer

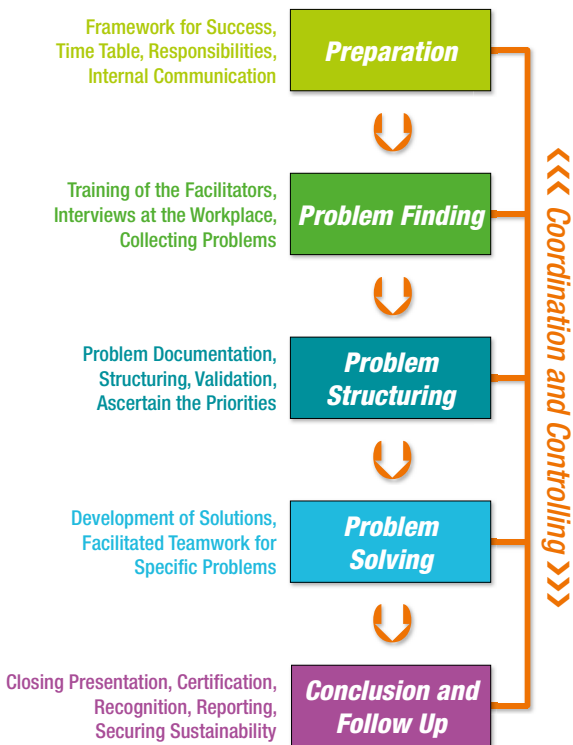
Our 70% Thesis

- 70% of employees have never submitted a suggestion
- 70% of employees can identify a problem yet have no solution
- 70% of employees can identify the problem yet cannot formulate a cost-benefit analysis
- 70% of employees do not speak the language of the organization as their mother tongue
- 70% of employees simply work according to their job description
- 70% of employees have never been asked at their place of work about existing problems

The Wager

- In a 15 minute personal interview an employee will name on average 3 concrete problems.
- On every interview day between 100.000 and 200.000 Euros benefit potential is identified through the problems and ideas of employees.
- The benefit-cost ratio of the interview days is greater than 20:1 (inclusive of all internal and external costs).





The Process Milestones

- The interview teams ask employees directly at their place of work about existing problems. Training is given on the ways to do this.
- The interview teams document the problems and also visually structure the ideas and problems on a problem chart. All the gathered information is simultaneously recorded electronically.
- Management and experts immediately decide on what measures and next steps to take. Decision-making tools have been developed for exactly this purpose. All monetary potential is evaluated in local currency on an annualized basis.
- Small teams develop solutions for specific problems using the facilitated PiT-Stop problem solving methodology. Facilitators are trained by us.
- The complete PiT-Stop workshop results are presented in databank form to senior management as part of the final day wrap-up.

Senior Executive and Management

- They bring all responsible parties to the table and set out the goals and framework for success.
- Through personal support and flexibility they become the promoters for the action days.

The Success Criteria

- A project manager is designated responsible for the action days. They are always present.
- The timely information to all involved employees supports the project and opens the necessary doors.
- Comprehensive checklists support the local team in their preparations.
- Detailed set-up procedures ensure the success of the action days.
- The experience and enthusiasm of our team brings dynamism and life to the project.

Your Support

- You are provided checklists for all important preparations:

Checklist for Action Days 📄

Senior Executive and Management

- Name a project leader or coordinator – their presence is always requested
- Commit personnel resources to the project
- Name the designated user department and determine an hourly amount for the savings calculations

Project Leader/Coordinator

Success Criteria

- Be personally present, flexibility is paramount
- Inform all involved employees as early as possible
- Plan for an extensive follow-up to the action days

The following people need to be informed

- Secretariat: letter of invitation and daily provisioning
- Facility Management: room requirements and set-up
- Targeted Department: What do they expect? What happens with the ideas and problems?
- Interviewers: What to expect? How long will it take? Can it lead to overtime?
- Assistants: When you will be needed?
- Management: When will the gathered problems and ideas be evaluated?
- Experts: When will they be required as part of the problem-solving teams?
- Work Council: When can the activities lead to overtime?
- Health and Safety: Will security clearance areas be visited? Are photographs permitted?
- Canteen: When will refreshments and meals be required?
- Personnel: Will non-regulatory entry requirements be required?
- Facilitators: When will they be trained and when will they be activated?
- External Team: Will require names of all interviewers and problem-solving facilitators, a floor layout, an organization chart, information about work shift hours and reporting requirements

Room Requirements and Refreshments

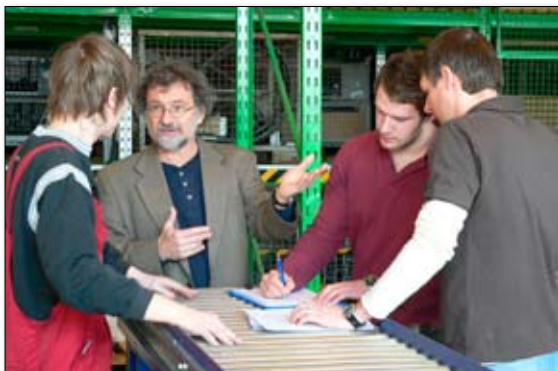
- The larger the better
- The closer to the designated department the better
- Avoid room changes during the action days
- Tables and chairs for all participants in U-form or island set-up
- Refreshments in the cafeteria, canteen but preferably in the action centre
- Hot and cold drinks all day

Why Interviews?

- Problems are best formulated there where they originate or show themselves.
- “Go to GEMBA” – “go to the place of origin” says the Kaizen philosophy.
- Every employee knows weaknesses at his workplace. Every employee has problems.
- Through the personal interviews we remove the requirement that employees must bring suggestions. We assume the role of actively soliciting ideas. We seek the problems and ideas. This brings success.

The Advantages of Interviews

- In a familiar environment talking is much easier.
- Work hardly needs to be interrupted.
- The employee can directly show the problem.
- Formulating and recording issues are eliminated.
- The problems of employees do not get filtered through management.



With Interviews we achieve more

- More employees are reached than with any other method
- More appreciation and sense of worth than with any other method
- More direct support for the employee than with any other method
- More improvement potential than with any other method

Start with Entry Level Questions

- The interview teams are instructed and receive a checklist of specially-formulated entry level questions. This makes the first steps easy.
- Two colleagues build a team. One asks while the other listens attentively and writes the answers on a pre-designed interview form. The formula is simple: “four ears – one mouth”.
- With selected questions the interviewers trigger the ‘awareness of waste’. The workplace is looked at through different eyes. Standards are put to the test.
- The annual costs of poor performance are estimated in time or material usage with the help of simple formulas.

This is what we find

- In Production Environments: over production, poor material usage, energy wastage, unnecessary set-up times, high failure rates, waiting times ...



- In Office Environments: long delivery times, error-filled documents, poor information flow, bureaucratic processes, redundant sources of material ...



Frequently Asked Questions about Problem Finding

- **Why is it necessary to solicit ideas through interviews? Does it not simply work through suggestion forms that everyone fills out?** No. Our experience shows that that does not work. There are many fact-based reasons why employees do not bring known problems to paper.
- **Why are there always two interviewers?** Four eyes and ears hear and see more than just two. The interview also goes much quicker.
- **Does one not receive many duplicate ideas when all employees within a department or division are asked?** Only approx. 10% of the mentioned problems are truly identical. Besides that, we also reach the less expressive employees, who otherwise would seldom say anything.
- **Are the estimates of time and monetary value not highly imprecise?** The estimates allow for clear priority-setting later in the process. They transmit a real sense of the magnitude of the problem. Therein lies their true worth.
- **Why does the interview take place at the workplace?** At the employee's place of work – in their home environment – they feel secure and there is hardly any interruption to their work. The visit expresses a genuine interest in and value towards the employee.



Visual Display through Problem Cards

The interviewers write the key information garnered through the interviews on coloured problem cards for maximal visual clarity.



- The problem description begins with a word that depicts the need for action: ‘unnecessary ...’, ‘wrong ...’, ‘unclear ...’, ‘unclean ...’ etc.
- Only one problem per card
- All cards receive a unique number

Problem Structuring by Clusters

- The cards are organized and allotted to clusters (themed problem areas) that are displayed on pin boards, that act as effective “problem charts”.

Typical Clusters

- Problem Types (ex. Material, Energy, Risks etc.)
- Divisions (ex. Purchasing, Production, Sales etc.)
- Work Stations (ex. Production Areas, Product Lines, Warehouse Sections etc.)
- Cost Centers (ex. Information Technology, Administration etc.)



Through ‘clustering’ we amass the problems in logical entities. This provides an ease of overview and enables practical handling within centres of responsibility for the next steps of the process.

Electronic Compilation of Interview Information

All data collected, allocation thereof and decisions made are recorded live by us in a pre-prepared excel spreadsheet. This has many advantages:

- There is a safeguard against information being lost
- The data can be reworked problem-free
- All shown results can be verified
- The allocation to clusters and to areas of responsibility are documented
- At the end of the PiT-Stop workshop all gathered information and resultant decisions made are captured in the spreadsheet; ideas, problems, solutions, dates, measures, benefit potential – simply everything.

Example: The Electronic Database

ID	Cluster	Problem	Problem Details	Solution	Professional Typology/Structure/Method
5	Office Supplies	Only purchasing of necessary. Best equipment also purchased then office supplies from and used suppliers.	Equipment selection. Consider purchasing of all office supplies from computer equipment supplier with discounted rates.		Structure solution
7	Transport	Integrated delivery of systems services. The way a customer contract was defined.	Needing for the correct contract terms for each time. Proposed solution: eventually only 2 contract systems.		Team Problem Solving
8	IT Packaging	Insufficient commercial safety wrapping.	Public wrapping should needs to be follow by the model every contract stage. Proposed solution: Should be packaged in correct format.		Team Problem Solving
9	IT Storage	Unnecessary purchase of packaging material.	Packaging material can only be disposed of through recycling facility daily waste. Two times per day need to search for waste and dispose of material. Proposed solution: Purchase a container at the work site.		

Example: Benefits Potential



Frequently Asked Questions about Problem Structuring

- **That looks like a lot of paperwork. How are we supposed to work with all the information?** We capture all the information live on our electronic database. With this spreadsheet file you can immediately work in a structured fashion.
- **Is the data entry point not a bottle neck?** When more than 5 interview teams are active, then a second data entry person works in parallel.
- **Why does everything need to be written on cards when it will be captured electronically anyway?** The problem cards achieve one thing most importantly: a good overview. This is the requirement for all the following steps. Through the posting of the cards, the magnitude of the problems and the multitude of opportunities becomes visible.
- **How can one get a grip on this flood of problems?** We take great care that the clusters remain manageable. The manager responsible for each cluster must be able to process the workload within their daily business. Otherwise there is no end result.



»A new idea is a fragile thing. A yawn or belittling gesture can kill it. A misplaced joke can damage it as well. A simple raising of the eyebrows can suffocate that same idea. A wrong word can send it into retreat.« *Bernie Sander*

Once the problems are recognized, managers and experts determine the next steps

- Person responsible for the problem solution
- Priority of the problem
- Type of problem solving method (ex. PiT-Stop problem solving teams)
- Date for problem resolution

These decisions are taken quickly and with authority

- Comprehensive problem charts (clusters)
- Practical decision-making tools (criteria lists)
- Accompanying facilitation on site

In this way you can

- Eliminate problem roadblocks with evaluators
- Solve problems effectively and efficiently
- Establish new ways to improve problem handling

Results of these workshops

- 10% Just-Do-Its (are immediately solvable)
- 10% quick wins-fast money (are implementable within 30-90 days)
- 30% of all problems are ideally suited for facilitated Pit-Stop problem solving teams
- 10% are related to necessary maintenance and repairs
- 40% are either mid and long-term solvable or to be assigned to existing projects or Not-Do-Its



For 30% of all problems the solution methodology is called Problem Solving in Teams (PiT)

- ➔ Selected problems are precisely defined and circumscribed. This minimizes the degree of complexity.
- ➔ The facilitators, specially trained by us, lead 3 to 7 participants through the problem solving session.
- ➔ Through this means, the employees develop quick, efficient, well-managed solutions and practical implementation measures.
- ➔ The method allows for solutions to be formulated within one hour.
- ➔ 80-95% of the developed solutions are, based on experience, 1:1 implementable.

Advantages

- ➔ Problems are primarily worked on where they occur and are solved by those, who are directly implicated by them. This frees up managers for other tasks.
- ➔ Over time all employees are involved in the search for and in the implementation of solutions. This requires entrepreneurial thinking.
- ➔ And through it all, the comprehensive training of the local facilitators is key to the success of the method.

Optimal Support through Work Tools

The image displays several work tools for the PiT method:

- Problem Solving in Teams Form:** A large grid with four main quadrants. The top-left quadrant is titled "1. Step: Was is the Problem?" and contains a list of participants, a moderator, and a date. The top-right quadrant is titled "2. Step: What are the causes for the Problem?" and "3. Step: How have these to be weighted?". The bottom-left quadrant is titled "4. Step: Through what measures can..." and contains two sub-sections: "Who...?" and "What...?". The top-right quadrant is divided into four smaller boxes labeled "Manpower", "Material", "Machine", and "Method".
- Brainstorming Rules:** A sheet with a list of rules, including "Meetings start on time", "Everyone works together actively", "Everyone listens and lets the other finish his thoughts", "Only one person talks at a time", "No personal critique", and "No hierarchy of people, just ideas".
- Teamplay Rules:** A sheet with a list of rules, including "Meetings start on time", "Everyone works together actively", "Everyone listens and lets the other finish his thoughts", "Only one person talks at a time", "No personal critique", and "No hierarchy of people, just ideas".

Frequently Asked Questions about Problem Solving

- **How can we assign so many problems and determine so many measures in so short a time?** We support this important process with creative tools for making decisions and finding solutions. Often good doses of courage and determination are a big help. That is what we provide.
- **How do the learned problem solving and decision-making tools allow themselves to be integrated into the daily work routine?** The new way of dealing with problems must become a part of the culture of the organization. This is where the senior executive team and management are called upon. They must create the latitude and allow for the time to make it happen. Often a simple OK from the boss is all that is necessary.
- **Why do facilitators need special training for this method?** Facilitators are good when they are well-grounded in the methodology and can function independently. This requires training and practise. Otherwise they become unsure and the process quickly escapes their control.

Important: Independent Facilitators



»A problem is half solved when it is clearly defined.« *John Dewey*

Recommendations for Sustainability

- Use the results spreadsheet. Check on the success of the proposed measures based on your relevant milestones.
- Ensure that sufficient time and the right people resources are dedicated to the implementation.
- Make the reporting of the results a fixed element of your meetings.
- Demand the continuous work of the trained facilitators and build more employees into internal facilitators.
- Give employees the time to actively participate in PiT-Stop problem solving sessions.
- Engage us on demand as external coaches for the implementation phase.
- Do internal marketing for the action days – before and after.
- Establish targeted indicators and signal the ongoing success through short update meetings.
- Showcase the activities continuously through billboards, Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) displays, internal magazines and the intranet.
- Say thank you to all active participants for their accomplishments. The recognition practises of an organization show whether the heart is there where the goals lie.



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Resumé

For organizations where idea management, suggestion systems or continuous improvement processes (CIP) are practised, the PiT-Stop methodology offers an excellent bottom-up source for ideas. It is an ideal instrument for managers, to ensure an organization-wide nurturing and harvesting of the creative potential of their employees and thereby provide an additional contribution to the development of the organization.

And for organizations, that do not practise any form of idea management, this facilitated idea generation methodology offers an efficient way. Discover the unused creative potential in each and every employee and quickly and effectively use it for performance improvement. PiT-Stop provides the proof!

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Bernie Sander

Bernie Sander, President of IT Innovation Transfer Inc., is an international speaker, consultant, trainer and book author in all aspects of managing employee ideas. He has with his "Wake-up Calls" empowered idea managers around the globe. He works with many Fortune 500 organizations, who with their idea processes save many millions annually.



IT Innovation Transfer Inc., founded in 1987, offers a broad spectrum of Idea Management Services for private as well as government organizations, institutes and associations:

- conferences and keynotes
- client-oriented training on site
- consulting in employee involvement and recognition
- certification, education and training in idea management
- readiness assessments and strategic roadmaps for the future
- facilitated PIT-Stop workshops

Publications



On Idea Management
A Manager's Guide
to Managing Ideas
ISBN 978-3-88260-074-2
In English Language



PIT-Stop –
Gesteuerte Ideen generierung
Das Praxishandbuch
ISBN 978-3-88260-075-9
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On Idea Management
Leitfaden für Führungskräfte
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