

## Facilitation Tip 4: Quantify the Causes

While facilitating an incident, it's important to keep the discussions factual, objective and neutral in order to mitigate blame, speculation and unnecessary debates. This tip focuses on remaining objective. The biggest suggestion for achieving this in your investigations is to quantify causes when possible. When you start to hear phrases such as "too many," "too much," "not enough" or "excessive," use it as a signal to quantify the amount. These terms are subjective and can cause unnecessary debates.

By quantifying the causes, your investigation findings will represent facts rather than personal perspectives or opinions. It will also assist you to:

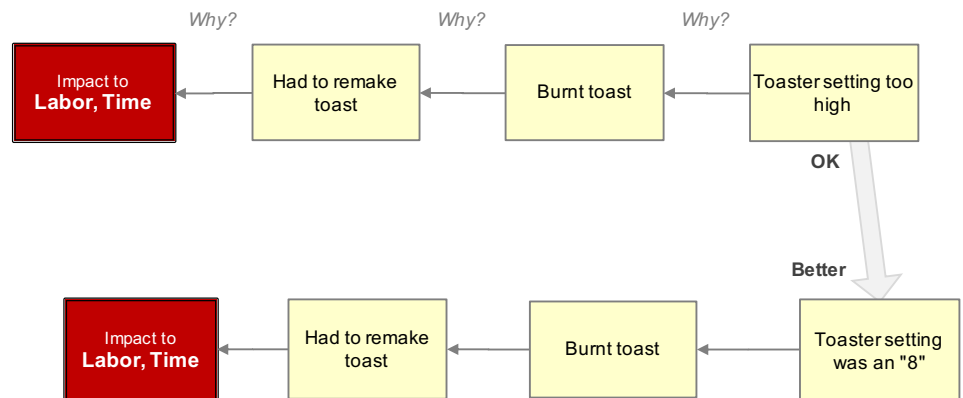
- Promote discussion and engagement during your investigations
- Reduce unnecessary and distracting debates
- Reveal causes that will identify more specific solutions

Let's look at this tip using two simple examples:

### Burnt Toast

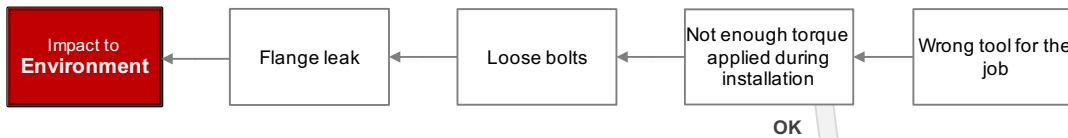
The toaster setting being "too high" isn't wrong, it just isn't the best way to phrase the cause. By quantifying the toaster setting rather than saying it was "too high," we can add specificity while minimizing a debate surrounding whether or not the toaster setting was "too high." If someone can argue the toaster setting isn't too high because it's what is required to make a frozen waffle, they will. Avoid going down a rabbit hole by quantifying causes when you can.

#### 3-Why Cause Map™ Diagrams



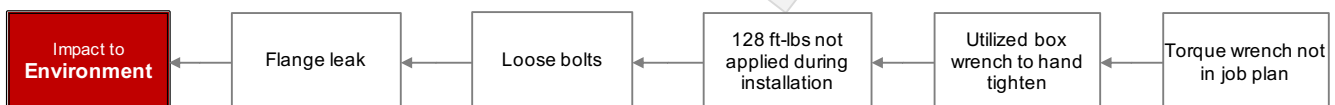
### Flange Leak

#### 4-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



This example highlights another benefit of quantifying the cause. "Not enough torque" is an OK way to phrase this, but by quantifying the torque value, it allows us to better understand why that value was not achieved. This shift allows us to be more specific with the tool that was used, which in turn allows us to better understand how the job was planned.

#### 5-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



**LESSON:** Being factual, objective and neutral in your investigations will help drive specificity and minimize unnecessary debates. If you hear subjectivity in your team meetings, encourage them to use evidence to quantify and specify the cause, so you can objectively document it.

Problem solving is a career skill. For training opportunities to further enhance your problem-solving skills, we have a variety of options available (both paid and free) to meet your specific training goals.

To learn more visit our website at [www.thinkreliability.com](http://www.thinkreliability.com)  
email: [info@thinkreliability.com](mailto:info@thinkreliability.com) phone: 281-412-7766

#### Facilitation Tip 4

Watch this video for a more thorough explanation regarding the importance of quantifying causes.



(3 minutes)