

Client Testimonials

SHORT TESTIMONIALS

Recent customers said this at the end of a **KEPNERandFOURIE®** workshop:

- 'Damn you Andrew! Wish I saw this stuff 20 years ago, I probably would have retired by now!'*
- "If I had this set of tools earlier in my career I would have destroyed the competition!"*
- "Helped the team visualize the reasons behind why we do what we do."*
- "The thinking behind my decisions has strengthened and tightened my leadership and management style which is leading to even better results in running a profitable business."*
- "Utilizing the tools from our training have been invaluable and are helping us shape and develop our teams to focus on the right critical thinking and strategies to dominate our industry."*
- "The tools improved strategic discussions, enabled us to discover short-comings quicker and empowered us to make decisions confidently within our established process."*
- "Directly after this training we resolved a long outstanding issue in a libraries database that saved nearly the cost of 3 full time employees who had been working solidly keeping a workaround going for the past 6 months."*
- "As a result of the SolutionWise process a client selected a solution that was very different to what they thought would happen. All agreed it was a superior solution and this saved them over \$5.5M."*
- "As a result of using the processes our client has reduced finger pointing/blame shifting by over 80%."*
- "Our client reduced MTTR by 50% resulting in \$80K per month."*
- "If these techniques have saved us over a million, just think how they will streamline all the processes in the rest of the group!"*
- "By implementing these problem solving techniques, and training the complete workforce, we will double the intelligence capacity of the group!"*
- "Prior to our use of Kepner and Fourie CauseWise and SolutionWise, it took us from 2 weeks to several months to "turn around" a plan of action to improve our processes and prevent re-occurrence. That time has been reduced to less than one week on complex issues. On non-complex issues, the turn-around time for "return to work" with the solution buy-in has been reduced from >12 hours to 1.5 hours."*

Client Testimonials

SPECIFIC SHORT TESTIMONIALS

FINDING ROOT CAUSE

We embarked on the Kepner and Fourie training with the expectation to improve our problem solving skills. We met that objective handsomely and we now have an attitude of always looking for the underlying reasons before jumping to action. This is a highly desirable state seeing that we are working with clients and do not want to resort to the old “blame fixing” game.

Olivier Poullard

Executive Program Director SITA

TECHNICAL VERSUS ROOT CAUSE

I always wanted to know why we could not identify the root cause more accurately. While doing the KandF training we were educated to the concept of Technical Cause versus Root Cause and that unique insight made all the difference in all our root cause analysis exercises after that.

David Pryde

EVP Product Support SGX

TECHNICAL VERSUS ROOT CAUSE

This is the best way I’ve ever seen on how to frame an incident in such a way that it makes sense to all present in the meeting. It ensured to progressed through this investigation in a systematic way that I liked very much.

Vinay Jain

Product Management – Service Assurance CITI

MAY 2018

Client Testimonials

SPECIFIC SHORT TESTIMONIALS

DNS ISSUE

I arrived at one of our remote infrastructure sites only to discover the team there were struggling with a DNS issue and could not get to the bottom of the problem.

After listening to their story I asked whether they applied the KEPNERandFOURIE CauseWise approach to this problem. They obviously did not and I instructed them to immediately apply the KandF processes. They verified the answer within 90 minutes.

So, my biggest challenge is that I know that KEPNERandFOURIE's processes are working, but cannot get my staff to stop with their "trial and error" thinking unless I tell them to stop it.

Kyran Murphy

SVP Infrastructure Macquarie ITS

COMPANY WIDE BENEFIT

I wanted to provide my whole division to have a common company wide and across all silos problem solving approach and got much more than I've bargained for. Not only have we met that initial expectation, but we also reduced the trail and error costs in most of our divisions. This is an excellent "cost reduction" initiative when handled correctly.

Liam Edwards

Past Executive Director of a Global Investment Bank

JANUARY 2017

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SPECIFIC SHORT TESTIMONIALS

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CLIENT WRITTEN TESTIMONIAL

KEPNERandFOURIE application success! I want to report back on the Auckland Voice Recorder Issue session...

The Problem:

5 months ago the Auckland Nice Voice Recorder was reported as failing during the automatic archiving process. Voice recording helps protect ABC IT Company in the event of disputes and for compliance with all legal and regulatory obligations.

Methodology applied:

CauseWise – Troubleshoot with certain critical questions that are necessary to gather relevant information accurately and quickly.

Outcome:

At first the vendors suspected that the tape drive needed replacing. However, two weeks after the new tape drive was installed, the issue reoccurred. The Voice Team then arranged a CauseWise session and invited all MBL Stakeholders, plus three vendors – BT, Agile and NICE.

A number of new potential causes were generated via the in-depth method of CauseWise.

Following a testing period, one of the new causes generated from the session was found to be the true cause. The root cause is also being addressed between MBL and the vendor. I am very proud of this achievement especially taking into account the emotions around this issue and the finger pointing that took place up to the session.

If you have any questions about this specific problem, please contact Amanda Greenslade.

Any questions regarding the K-F processes, please contact one of the in-house Facilitators.

Kim Boise MIM

OCTOBER 2016

Client Testimonials

CLIENT WRITTEN TESTIMONIAL

CODE DEVELOPMENT ISSUE – user names

(This is a summary of emails provided to us by a client about a Sev1) they had. I did not change the text or spelling) I've taken names out to protect identities)

Just a quick note (see below emails) about how we used the Kepner-Fourie – Causewise process to solve a Sev-1 issue which otherwise was certain to prevent our project from going live on the due date.

Our project go live date was also fully geared towards a once a year window of cutting over to the new US Tax year so we were really under pressure to solve this issue.

Background

The FICC Account Team made a request for a KF facilitator to run a CasueWise on very short notice. The team had been experiencing a problem in the test environment for about 2 weeks and had not been able to make to progress on the resolution. The CauseWise Intuitive approach was selected and a 90 minute session was scheduled with the team. The team only included 2 people out of 8 who had previous KF experience.

The Problem Statement was:

“The MTS Adaptor is consistently failing in its long running pool connections to MTS, manifested as seg faults.”

The Most Probable Cause identified

It turned out that the key piece of information was the related to the question “Geographically where is the object located”. It became apparent that the problem never occurred on one developer’s machine and always occurred on another developer’s machine.

Only one possible cause that skimmed through the testing required a couple of assumptions. These assumptions lead to a number of actions which included confirming any configuration differences, confirming the behaviour on different numbers of processor cores and confirming the usernames and passwords that were being used by different developers.

At this point the team decided to investigate the assumptions and to re-engage with the CasueWise process if further assistance was needed. The discussions in the session and further investigation uncovered the fact that different developers were using different usernames. Testing with usernames of different length highlighted that shorter account names always worked and longer account names never worked.

Testing and Verification

After further testing the length of the usernames has been confirmed as the cause and the team are now able to progress their new release towards production. During the wrap-up the problem owner stated “It [*CauseWise*] really did help to define our issue and before the session we were most definitely not following either the correct leads or a set methodology to solve the problem.”

Charl Hansen – Director Operations

July 2018

Client Testimonials

CLIENT WRITTEN TESTIMONIAL

NETWORK ISSUE

Hi Guys,

Just a short note to keep you going. The following is a quote from Patrick Kramer, which I would like to share with everyone! Thanks Patrick and well done!!

“Just like to share with you a K&F session I did yesterday using the Cause Wise Analysis.

Background

WSG and data networks were unable to identify a connectivity issue with an application server in the IIS management network. After spending 4 hours+ trying to resolve the issue, both teams were indicating that the issue didn't reside within their technology.

Process

I'd organise a cause wise analysis session with all stakeholders, we were able to identify several possible causes within 45 minutes and tested each of these causes. The problem was resolved using the first action item that came out of the Cause Wise Analysis.

Observations:

- Stakeholders were interested to use K&F process
- As the stakeholders provided all the information, I had immediate buy in regarding the action points
- I was able to avoid discussions regarding "The problem doesn't reside in my technology area" as the K&F process doesn't allow stakeholders to enter into these conversations.

Great outcome.”

Mark Duffy – Infrastructure Director

November 2018

Client Testimonials

CLIENT WRITTEN TESTIMONIAL

MEDICAL INSURANCE IT DIVISION ISSUE

(The client was kind enough to arrange his data into the categories given)

Client Issue

The client had an issue whereby the various stakeholders in the C-Team Project could not agree on how to improve “Change Control” of a certain application. They’ve tried various suggestions and most of them did not provide the required results.

Approach

The team was prompted to use the KEPNERandFOURIE® SolutionWise Max4 approach to create a common understanding of the requirements and then to develop a solution from the “ground up”.

Results

“We did meet this morning and after 35 minutes of discussion, the group came to the consensus conclusion. We’ve uncovered some requirements we never thought of before, which made a major difference in the solution requirements. So the exercise really did help us yesterday. It gave us some pointed questions to ask and led the group to the same consensus answer.

So I just wanted to let you know that it did work. I did go into the session with some skepticism, thinking that problem solving and decision making after 30 some years in the same line of business you think you've heard it all. But I do want you to know that I really appreciated your teaching. I really learned a lot from the class. It's hard, but I learned a lot from it. And I did come away with a totally different perspective. I want to thank you for your efforts”.

Barry Morgan
Director: Applications Development

August 2018

Client Testimonials

CLIENT WRITTEN TESTIMONIAL

Jim and Brad,

I got a voice mail from Dorothy Jones – one of last week’s participants – on Friday. Her group had applied SolutionWise to a current issue in her area and she was taking the results to a meeting on Friday morning. Her message to me below says the rest!

Hey Ellen,

This is Dorothy from your ThinkingWise class in Columbia. I wanted to just give you an update on our real life scenario that we worked through yesterday (*SolutionWise*).

We had come to the conclusion that we needed to open up a change control against the Mikesh Project. We did meet this morning and after 35 minutes of discussion, the group came to the same conclusion. So the exercise really did help us yesterday. It gave us some pointed questions to ask and led the group to the same consensus. So I just wanted to let you know that it did work.

I did go into the class with some skepticism, thinking that problem solving and decision making after 30 some years in the same line of business you think you’ve heard it all. But I do want you to know that I really appreciated your teaching. I really learned a lot from the class.

It’s hard, but I learned a lot from it. And I did come away with a totally different perspective. I want to thank you for your efforts.

Thanks Ellen. Maybe I’ll have an opportunity to sit in on another of your classes.

That’s what I like to hear after a class! Overall, I think the class went very well. I’m looking forward to the next one!

Ellen

October 2017

Client Testimonials

CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES

1. CLIENT WANTED TO REDUCE THEIR HIGH LEVEL OF DOWNTIME, BUT DID NOT KNOW HOW TO GO ABOUT IT.

The client contacted Thinking Dimensions to help them to mature their Service Management practices to reduce costs and improve quality and productivity at the same time. The TD consultant confirmed the objective with them and once confirmed conducted a PriorityWise process to determine the overall core issues to be resolved in achieving this objective.

The analysis showed the processes of Incident, Problem and Change Management were the core issues to be resolved. TD trained about four in-house facilitators to help the TD consultant to work through all the issues and to produce collaborated answers. Many SolutionWise processes were used with the design and establishment of appropriate processes surrounding the Service Management function.

Solutions produced had total buy-in from all the appropriate stakeholders and the level of successful implementation was very high. All participants felt empowered and naturally supported all implementation efforts and sometimes went out of their way to ensure implementation was successful.

RESULT: The client implemented seamless processes from Incident discovery to communicating the new solution, which normally involve the elimination of “real” root causes.

2. FIRST LINE TROUBLESHOOTERS NOT MEETING THE METRIC OF “2-MINUTE CALLS” TO RESTORE CLIENT’S SERVICE.

This Service Management Division had 12 front line staff troubleshooters dealing with Clients and Business Infrastructure and Network issues. The 12 staff members were complaining vehemently that they are not adequately staffed. They were missing the 2-minute deadline on a regular basis and had long waiting times.

The client asked TD to find out why this was happening, because it rarely happened before. The TD Consultant investigated and realized that the volume of calls increased due to exponential growth in business. The TD consultant spoke to the staff about their metrics and nobody liked it. That is when he realized he needed to do a SolutionWise – Max4 approach to get the staff themselves to come up with a creative solution. They eventually decided they needed two initiatives:

First they wanted to change their metric from time to quality. They wanted to be properly trained in troubleshooting skills and then try to solve almost all calls without having to worry about the 2-minute rule. Secondly, they wanted their Knowledge Management database to be improved. This was done with the various vendors’ help.

RESULT: The first-line troubleshooters were much more effective in solving issues and knowing when to escalate. Escalations dropped by at least 82% over a period of six months.

Client Testimonials

CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES

3. NO COMMON PROBLEM SOLVING PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS: NEED A REPEATABLE STRUCTURED PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS THAT COULD BE SUPPORTED BY ALL.

The solution suggested was to implement a Problem solving culture & structure that could be utilized with the existing management structures. This Global Investment Bank is growing at a rapid rate and experiencing problems that staff across silos are not collaborating with each other. The IT professionals of this bank found it increasingly difficult to manage this complex and demanding situation. Problem solvers needed to have speed when resolving issues and cannot afford to get cross silo inputs, because it is taking too long.

It was clear to Thinking Dimensions that this client needed a good Problem Management System/practice. IT Management were educated on how their situation could be resolved with a simple but very effective practice of Tiers of Problems. This involved the appropriate problem solving technique with the combination of the correct information sources.

RESULT: Within the first month Management saw encouraging results coming through from employees. The approach was simple. The problem owner had 12 hours to solve the incident using the Thinking on Your Feet approach. If not resolved, the owner had permission to use appropriate information sources across silos to systematically work through the incident.

Client Testimonials

METRICS BASED SUCCESS STORIES

1. REDUCTION IN MEAN-TIME-TO-REPAIR (MTR) – International Investment bank

The Service Director in this Investment bank had a need to improve collaboration across the various entrenched silos in the IT Division. This caused major delays in restoring and repairing incidents.

TD helped him and his staff by providing all IT professionals with common incident investigation templates. Sections of these templates were incorporated into their existing investigation process and tickets. TD then transferred skills to key people ensuring the correct use of these templates.

Over a period of six months the staff improved quality of the information and arrived at the restoration and subsequent root causes quicker. It was determined that the MTR was reduced from an average of 18 hours to an average 3.8 hours.

2. REDUCTION IN MEAN TIME TO RESTORE (MTTR) - Global Appliance Distribution Company

The VP of IT Infrastructure in this global company approached us to help them reduce the frequency of recurring incidents. He was fairly happy about the restoration efforts, but highly alarmed about the recurrence of the same type of incidents.

TD worked with their staff to develop their approach to determine the root cause of an issue. Working with their key stakeholders, TD also facilitated a session on how to improve the process of Problem Management. This included provision of rigorous and structured Technical Cause Analysis and Root Cause Analysis investigation processes:

They achieved the following results:

- Handover period from IM to PM reduced to 1 day from 8 days
- Recurring incidents dropped by 67% due to improved quality of information
- Improved commitment by stakeholders to implement corrective actions

Client Testimonials

METRICS BASED SUCCESS STORIES

3. IN MEAN-TIME-TO-REPAIR (MTR) - IT Services Company (Outsourced Vendor) – War Room Situation

The Chief Major Incident Manager of this company was faced with multiple situations struggling to get restoration within the client specified SLA timing requirements. He had the feeling that they were not “on top of their game” and in many cases resorted to rolling back changes indiscriminately.

TD CSI Team diagnosed the problem to be the method used to identify incidents. The identification of the fault experienced was not done properly with the result that the team was always forced to deal with information that was too general. TD provided them with a process and questions tool that enabled them to ask the right questions from the right information sources giving them a much better chance of getting to the real fault. The major incident managers went through a simulation designed by TD to hone these skills and ensure immediate transfer of learning to their jobs.

This small “correction” in how to ask the right questions from the right people generated all the specificity of information they needed. They managed to get on top of the situation quicker and more aggressively. This caused a new vitality in the team and resultant confidence that they can now face any major incident. While the MTR was not specifically measured, it was acknowledged that it dropped dramatically.

4. REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT FAILURES - Research & Development Testing: Software Company

The Applications Director of this company approached TD to help them reduce the number of failures experienced in-the Design and Development of new software. They would typically test a software application and have multiple failures. This caused major delays in the project deadline.

TD coached selected key staff members to introduce a discipline of “thinking before acting”. They were taught how to use a thinking approach of “finding the core issue first” before acting on the failures. This approach made it possible for them to identify the core issue(s) in a multiple failure-testing situation. Once they all agreed on the core issue, they would then use an investigative process introduced by TD to get to Cause & Solution answers quickly and accurately.

The result was that all failures are now handled in a much more rational and structured way. A lot of unplanned costs were eliminated as this TD solution replaced their typical “trial and error” approaches. This had a major impact on project deadlines and budgets.

Client Testimonials

METRICS BASED SUCCESS STORIES

5. SEARCHING FOR THE OPTIMAL SOLUTION - Regional Bank In America: Decision About Client Services Facilities

Managers in the Infrastructure division of this bank were struggling to reach agreement on the identification and choice of “the best” solution regarding a common Client Services facility. The vetting process was lacking structure and had become politicized. After three months, one of the managers asked TD to help with this challenge.

TD helped them to identify the appropriate stakeholders and then conducted a facilitation exercise scheduled over four sessions. This phased process facilitated the communications and consolidation of all identified stakeholder inputs. TD used their Max4 approach in three distinct phases to foster agreement at the end of each stage.

A decision was reached after three weeks and the final decision was checked for support with each original stakeholder. All stakeholders promised their support and commitment for implementation. The decision was implemented without any further delays and saved this bank \$147,000 in purchasing and leasing superfluous equipment and facilities.

6. REDUCTIONS IN ESCALATIONS – Medical Devices Company IT Division

The GM of this IT division had problems where 80% of incidents that were being reported to the Service/Help Desk were escalated to the 2nd and 3rd line of troubleshooters. In many cases IT managers were tied up in problem solving meetings and struggling to get answers. This meant heavy factory floor unplanned downtime.

TD got involved by identifying the processes, role players, tools and templates being used in this company. TD then facilitated various meetings with the appropriate stakeholders to develop a knowledge management base for the service desk staff. TD took the most critical equipment and facilitated faults with typical causes with each of the identified subject matter experts. TD also transferred appropriate problem solving skills for using the newly modified and embedded TD Root Cause Analysis templates.

Escalations to the 2nd tier of troubleshooting dropped by 60% and further escalations to the 3rd tier dropped by 82% within a period of 6 months.

Client Testimonials

METRICS BASED SUCCESS STORIES

7. RISK REDUCTION in UPGRADE IMPLEMENTATION - International Bank

This bank's Risk Division was inundated with daily changes to be implemented associated with their NextGen major upgrade to a new software platform. They stated that 80% of their incidents originated from these changes. They wanted TD to help them to deal with this situation more effectively.

TD worked closely with an internal team on a carefully planned project so that we do not add to the high level of changes they are already experiencing. TD helped with a "Core Issue" process that would identify the changes with the highest potential impact. TD coupled this with imparting skills on how to do a proper Risk Identification and mitigation.

The Risk Division is now working with the 20% of changes that could account for 80% of the incidents. By rectifying this focus, the Risk Division is now avoiding almost all the risks emanating from this upgrade initiative.

8. CLIENT PRIORITY-2 INCIDENTS - Aviation Software Platform Company

Our client is a software company who provided application services to the airline industry. At one stage, our client experienced a major increase in software failures reported by a specific airline. Our client company was blamed for these failures for which they did not feel responsible.

TD facilitated one session with representation from both our client and the airline. Firstly we helped our client and their customer to mutually agree on the core issues to be resolved. Then the technical cause and the root cause of the "core" failures were identified and the airline company had to reverse certain internal policy decisions they had made which remedied the problem. Subsequent to this, TD was asked to train in-house professional facilitators to handle similar situations that might occur in the future.

These facilitators became highly skilled in troubleshooting and earned respect from senior management. Now, whenever a complaint is received, a TD trained client in-house facilitator would determine the appropriate stakeholders from both parties and facilitate a quick resolution to the problem situation.