

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Successful teams—whether in sports or business—usually perform well because each member contributes talents and skills to the group effort. What contribution do problem-solving skills make to team efforts? Provide at least one example that illustrates your points.
2. You can take a problem-solving approach to resolving conflicts in an organization. Suppose you and your colleague are working together on a high-profile project to develop software for handling orders at your company. You want to adapt existing software and your colleague wants to develop new software. How would you apply the problem-solving steps shown in Figure 1-2 to resolve the conflict?
3. Describe a time when you solved a basic problem. Then describe a situation in which you solved a complex problem. What are the similarities and differences in the approaches and the solutions?
4. Samuel Johnson said, "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful." What does this mean for solving problems in a contemporary business?
5. Based on the grids shown in Figures 1-9 and 1-10, list three typical business problems, such as flat sales, loss of loyal customers, and dissatisfied employees. Draw a grid showing how you would solve one of these problems.

Independent Challenge 1

Lawrence Media in Nashville, Tennessee, specializes in promotional products for businesses, such as corporate apparel, executive gifts, and product giveaways. As an assistant to Ken Lawrence, the founder of the company, you participate in many meetings and projects. During a recent meeting with Ken and his project managers, he said Lawrence Media had a major problem retaining good salespeople. Figure 1-16 summarizes his statements. Ken asked you, the other assistants, and the project managers to help him solve the problem.

- a. Open the **PS1-IC1.docx** document and follow the steps in the worksheet.
- b. Proofread the document carefully to fix any grammar or formatting errors.
- c. Submit the document to your instructor as requested.

FIGURE 1-16

Ken:
"The turnover is terrible. Good salespeople sign up, work hard, seem to enjoy their stay, and then leave for our biggest competitors and start working against us."

Facts:

- Average annual attrition among salespeople is 43%.
- When salespeople quit, the company loses the equivalent of two to four times the amount of their annual salary in lost opportunities and expenses in training new personnel.

Independent Challenge 2

You work with Carla Marcus, the owner of Sage Realty Services in Winnetka, Illinois. Her firm was one of the fastest growing companies in the area until recently. When the real estate market slowed nationwide, Sage Realty's sales dropped off significantly. Figure 1-17 illustrates Carla's problem. Carla asks you to help her analyze her problem and develop possible solutions.

- a. Open the **PS1-IC2.docx** document and follow the steps in the worksheet.
- b. Proofread the document carefully to fix any grammar or formatting errors.
- c. Submit the document to your instructor as requested.

FIGURE 1-17

