**FIVE WHYS**

An exercise to understand the true nature of the problem or opportunity that initiates a project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The five whys exercise simplifies and gives focus to your project when you start, helping you to uncover who is important and why a particular problem should be solved. | 1. Print an A3 copy of the five whys template or draw it on large butchers paper.  
2. Write your project problem or opportunity in the first box  
Start your statement with "We want to explore why...<your problem statement>."  
3. Ask why that proposition is important  
Start your answer with “Because…” and write it in the conversation bubble. This is a good time to think about who is important in that context.  
4. Refine your scope  
Rewrite that answer as a question beginning with "Why..." in the next box.  
5. Repeat and continue  
Go through this process until you are not able to come up with new answers.  
6. Redefine your project focus  
You should now have a better question that is:  
• defined in scope and user or consumer focused  
• aligned with the original problem or opportunity  
• worded positively, without jargon or ‘internal speak’  
• not solution oriented  
• an exciting prospect to solve. | 30-90 minutes | • The original problem or opportunity statement that has initiated your project  
• Five whys template A3 printout or large butchers paper  
• Marker pens  
• Adhesive or pins | • You may not need to ask why five times, or you may need to ask more. Continue this process until there are no more "Because…” responses.  
• Don’t go too narrow.  
• Don’t start writing ideas or solutions in your “Because…” responses. |
5 WHYS TEMPLATE

Starting problem – Why is our clinic not running at capacity?

Problem statements

- We want to explore why is our new stroke rehab clinic not running at capacity.
- Why does everyone use the services traditionally accessed?
- Why don’t they know about our services and what we do?
- Why don’t we tell the community what we do here?
- The real problem is that patients aren’t coming because they don’t know about us. How do we promote our service to the community more effectively?

Because

- Everyone is still using the individual allied health services that were traditionally accessed before we opened.
- Perhaps they don’t know about our services.
- We don’t tell the community what we do here.
- We expect GPs and the community to just know.