



Cornell University Learning Strategies Center

This Helpful Procedure for Problem-Solving is demonstrated in the videos.

(1) Clearly Define What the Problem is Asking

For example: Analysis
Relationships
Systems
Units
Tolerate ambiguity and be patient

(2) Create Your Own Idea of the Problem and Identify How it Relates to What You Already Know

For example: Translate – draw a diagram and label it
Identify units
Evaluate creatively
 generalize ... or simplify
 consider heuristics
 recall and apply knowledge, concepts
Keep an open mind and be willing to take risks
Monitor progress and be patient
Stress management, if one gets stuck

(3) Plan a solution

For example: Analysis
Reasonableness
Decision-making
Carefulness and honesty
Be persistent and patient; revisit (1) &/or (2) as needed

(4) Carry out the plan

For example: Analysis
Carefulness and attention to detail
Big picture perspective
Monitor progress and be patient; revisit (1), (2) &/or (3) as needed

(5) Evaluate, check and look back

For example: Analysis
Big picture answer, as well as details
 Reasonableness
 Units
Skepticism and honesty
 Have you answered the question that was asked?
Return to (1), (2), (3) &/or (4) if necessary