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## **Key Business Solutions: Essential problem-solving tools and techniques that every manager needs to know (Financial Times Series)**

*Antonio E. Weiss*

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**Antonio E. Weiss : Key Business Solutions: Essential problem-solving tools and techniques that every manager needs to know (Financial Times Series)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Key Business Solutions: Essential problem-solving tools and techniques that every manager needs to know (Financial Times Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Approach By Marwan Al-qaydy Excellent framework with structured activities. I very much like it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Key Business Solutions By Jose De O. Barros Jr. Very useful in our day-to-day work. It contains rules of thumb for each area of your company in order to manage in a way "the simplest the best" !!! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good - but misleading title By investingbythebooks Who wouldn't want the tool to solve business problems? The British-Mexican Antonio Weiss has a varied and interesting history. With an academic background as an historian of the state and religion he moved on to become a management consultant doing work for the UK public sector. The author, also a contributing expert to Latin News and a Labor party activist, will soon publish an exploration of the religious beliefs of Margaret Thatcher funded by the Margaret Thatcher foundation. Weiss's basic thesis is that business leaders - like most people - often lack a method to solve problems. This book is meant to deliver a proven methodology to guide the reader successfully through the problem solving process. The subtitle is "Essential business-solving tools and techniques that every manager needs to know". I like what Weiss has written but I also think the book misses its mark with regards to the thesis. It does not deliver problem-solving tools for managers; it delivers project management techniques for management consultants or project managers trying to deliver a recommendation to solve a business problem. Hence, the author delivers a McKinsey-BCG-Bain-type of process answer to a more broad and general topic. With that said the so-called OBTAIN-model is among the better descriptions of this type of process that I've read. There are two parts to the book where the first by one chapter per letter describes the OBTAIN-project management process and the second part lists a number of business tools like the 4Ps of marketing, SWOT-analysis etc. In short the letters in OBTAIN stands for: Outline - frame the problem into a goal that you need to achieve; Break Down - separate the problem into manageable pieces that are easier to solve; Test - relatively early in the process a hypothetical solution should be developed and then this is tested, discarded or refined; Analyze - do the analysis to get to the root of the problem and verify your hypothesis; Imagine - come up with an innovative solution that is developed jointly with key stakeholders; Notify - have the right techniques to communicate the solution. In addition, there are the two steps (and chapters) on managing the stakeholders and managing the project team. For each process step one or two useful tools (like for example the Hypothesis Tree or the Prioritization Matrix) are presented. I also liked the chapter on how to communicate the solution (not surprisingly with a McKinsey-Barbara Minto type of presentation structure). Part two of the book feels more like an appendix even though some of the tools, like De Bono's Six Thinking Hats, perhaps can be said to be closer to the more generic theme of the subtitle. When I come in contact with the early-hypothesis driven management consultant model I'm always reminded of a quotation from Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes that has become popular among investors: "The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession"; the point being that if you decide on a solution too early your research process will risk falling victim to confirmatory bias. On the other hand it is obviously equally true that more information has declining marginal utility and if you decide too late a lot of effort will have been a waste of time. The consultant leans towards an earlier decision than the investor with regards to this trade off. Further, I get the nagging feeling that such a strict process focus as in the OBTAIN-model could come in the way of solutions that really changes the playing field. The focus is to come up with "the right" solution that can be accepted by all stakeholders. This type of solution will probably lead to satisfied paying customers, but I'm not sure it goes further than that. If you work at a corporate strategy department or are an aspiring management consultant this is a very useful book to read. This is a review by investingbythebooks.com

This book explains how to resolve every challenge faced on a day-to-day basis in your business by presenting an unbeatable inventory of proven problem solving tools and techniques to help you tackle your toughest business dilemmas effectively. You will learn how to:

- Overcome any business challenge with robust logic and structure
- How to break down problems and make your workload lighter
- Deliver the "killers" recommendations
- Discover how to successfully implement change in people and organisations
- How to keep yourself, your team, and your stakeholders happy
- How to use an effective hypothesis-driven approach to problem solving Using case studies, a "best practice exemplar" and at least one figurative table or figure, every dilemma is brought to life equipping you with the very best tools to confront any problem your business may face.
- "The most successful businesses don't avoid problems - they solve them."
- This practical, insightful and entertaining book guides you through how to do this.
- An indispensable resource for any manager. 'Richard Newton, Business consultant and best-selling author
- 'One of the key attributes in running a business successfully is the ability to see a situation in perspective.
- Too often the real issues go unrecognised, signs are misread, an opportunity slips by, the wrong problem is addressed. Only in retrospect is it obvious what should have been done. It is not easy, but the tools and techniques covered in Key Business Solutions should help.

rsquo; Sir George Cox, Author

of the HM Treasury Cox Review of Creativity in UK Business and former Chairman of the Design Council

“An outstanding book about problem solving... it will stand the test of time.” Andrew May, FIC CMC FCMI  
“Intelligently and elegantly written... really helps people how to use management models” Marian Lauder, MBE FCMI  
From the Back Cover 'The tools and techniques covered in this book will be of enormous benefit to any manager. I thoroughly recommend it.' Caroline Cake, Director, 2020 Delivery  
Antonio is a problem-solving expert and a brilliant writer. His clear thinking on the vital business skills covered in this book will transform the way you manage.  
“Andrew Shelton, independent consultant  
Key Business Solutions shows you how to logically and practically solve business problems. Every challenge faced in business – from increasing sales and meeting cost reduction targets to formulating strategy and improving team morale – can be tackled effectively by using the robust, easy-to-use methodology presented in this book. Discover the unbeatable problem-solving tools used by some of the world’s top professional service firms. This concise, practical guide is a vital reference on 35 of the most powerful tools and techniques commonly used in business, from the BCG growth-share matrix and 2x2 prioritisation grids to issue trees and problem statements. Key Business Solutions brings these procedures to life with detailed descriptions, explanatory case examples and tips on when and how to make the most of these tools in the problem-solving process. **THE CLEARER GUIDE TO THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES THAT CAN SOLVE EVEN YOUR TOUGHEST BUSINESS DILEMMAS**  
About the Author  
Antonio E. Weiss is a management consultant and writer. Antonio learnt about solving tough business problems at one of the UK’s leading boutique management consultancy firms, 2020 Delivery. There he has worked across a range of public sector organisations, focussing on issues varying from performance improvement and pathway redesign to efficiency savings and designing and delivering training courses on modelling and problem-solving. On a pro bono basis in an independent consulting capacity he has also worked on industrial policy in Central Asia. Antonio also likes to apply his problem-solving skills to a number of different situations outside the business world. He is a governor of one of the largest community colleges in London and has also written for a number of publications, including the Guardian, on a variety of issues. In between consulting and his other responsibilities, his next project is to write a history of management consultancy in Britain. He holds a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree in History from the University of Cambridge.