Steps to Conducting a Five Whys Analysis

1. Gather the Team

- [ ] Invite all employees affected by the issue to participate in the analysis

2. Choose a Leader

- [ ] Identify an individual to facilitate the process, guide the meeting and document all findings

3. Define the Problem

- [ ] Agree on the specific definition of the problem that you have met to discuss. The leader should document the agreed definition.

4. Ask the First "Why"

- [ ] The leader asks 'Why?' the defined problem initially occurred. As a team, discuss and explore various avenues of thought.

5. Record the Answers

- [ ] Record all answers no matter how obvious they seem. Discuss these answers and agree on the most likely systemic cause before moving to the next 'why'.

6. Repeat for Each "Why"

- [ ] Repeat the process of asking 'Why?', where each iteration is questioning the answer to the previous 'Why?'. Agree on a systematic cause at each level until you have reached a root cause. This should be clear when discussions no longer bring about productive or useful answers.

7. Agree on Corrective Actions

- [ ] Review each question/answer combination and agree on the corrective action (if required), down to, and including, the level of the root cause.
- [ ] The "Leader" assigns responsibility for each corrective action and documents this in the analysis.

8. Record and Share the Analysis

- [ ] The leader documents and communicates the findings (including follow up actions) to the group involved in the discussion and any others affected by any of the proposed changes.