

Problem/Solution Essay

A problem/solution essay presents a problem, usually discussing several aspects of the problem, then concludes by discussing solutions to the problem. The problem may be addressed in the following ways:

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| 1. Effects only: | Describe the problem only in terms of its effects. Use examples. |
| 2. Causes and effects: | In addition to the effects, outline the causes of the problem. This approach is especially appropriate when discussing solutions in terms of preventive measures. |
| 3. Extended example: | After a topic sentence, illustrate the problem by using an extended example, e.g. tell the story of someone who experienced the problem, or continue the anecdote from your introduction. |

The solutions may be presented in various ways and you have to think about which way would be the most appropriate for the particular problem you are discussing. Here are some ways to present solutions:

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| 1. Preventive measures: | Ways to prevent the problem from occurring in the first place, such as how to prevent skin cancer. |
| 2. A series of steps: | Suggest the easiest and most obvious solution first, but if that doesn't work, try something else, etc. For example, if you have a noisy neighbor, you might first talk to him/her; if that doesn't work, arrange for a mediator; etc. (a last resort might be to call the police). |
| 3. Advice: | Give some advice and helpful hints. |
| 4. A choice of solutions: | These solutions may be ones that have already been tried, including those which have been unsuccessful, and new solutions which you are proposing. |

Make sure that your essay is well-balanced. The most original part of your essay, and the section which will require the most critical thinking, will be the solutions. Make sure that you address the solutions in depth. The solutions section of the essay should be as long or longer than the section describing the problem.

Coherence in body paragraphs

A body paragraph needs to hold together as a unit, i.e. it needs to have **coherence**. There are several ways to maintain coherence in a body paragraph:

1. Refer to old information when introducing new information, for example:

Few students understand the importance of seeing a college advisor early in their years at college. Students who do not see a college advisor may waste time and money taking courses they do not need. Indeed, my friend Artur was such a student. He

2. Use words which are related to each other in the given context:

Phishers use electronic communication, such as e-mail and instant messaging, to gain sensitive information that they can use for criminal purposes. Such information may include passwords or account numbers. PayPal users have been targeted in the

3. Use parallel structures:

Victims of abuse need to articulate clearly when the incident happened and what exactly occurred. They need to maintain consistency, focus on the facts, and remember details. It is only when

4. Use demonstrative pronouns (*this, that, these, those*) and lots of examples:

The clearing below the waterfall was bathed in filtered sunlight. This induced a sense of other-worldliness which made us feel like privileged visitors. Shafts of sunlight seemed to select individual rocks, twigs, leaves, flowers, and pools for display. These glowed in the half-light like

5. Use linking words, such as coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and transition words:

There are designated smoking areas on campus, but they are often ignored by smokers. Therefore, campus authorities need to either enforce use of these areas or consider an outright ban on smoking. Unless enforcement is effective, anti-smoking advocates are likely to push for a ban and

Note: Please restrain yourself in the use of transition words. Often better connections are made with coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. A paragraph heavy with transition words does not a good paragraph make.

Problem/Solution Essay: Example #1

Don't Be a Target

"This is just like I have got an ATM in my room!" When I used Internet Banking at first, I was impressed by the usefulness of the Online Banking system. Thanks to the Internet, rapid information technology advances have led us to a more convenient world. Now we can manage our own account without going to the bank. Even if you don't have enough time to go to a bank, you will immediately be able to transfer your money by using the Internet. However, in this convenient way to access a bank account, your money might be exposed to serious problems and has the potential to be stolen by someone whom you don't know. To protect our property from crime, and to use the Internet Banking effectively, there are several ways in which we should pay more careful attention.

A few years ago, my sister told me that, on her credit history, she had found some weird withdrawals. According to my sister, one day she was looking at her credit account to check monthly payments by using the Internet. Actually, she hadn't recognized the fact, until that day, that a small amount of money had been taken from her account over a few months (Mori). She wondered what she had paid for, so she soon checked all receipts, which she had kept just in case. However, she couldn't find any receipts for the payments. Moreover, she still had no idea about the purchases, so she called to the bank and asked a bank worker to stop the account. Fortunately, the bank returned the money to her, and the bank worker said to her she might have been cheated on her credit number and password while she was shopping online.

If so, how can we protect money from crime? First, the most basic thing is don't access your bank account from the computers in an Internet cafe or other public places. The computers in public places have a much greater possibility to be a target of the "Key Logger" program (Kim). If the program is set up on a computer, the program will memorize every key operation which you type. Furthermore, the program has an automatic function itself to send the collected information, such as your password or ID number, to the criminal.

Next, you shouldn't keep the same password for a long time. Even if you only accessed the bank account from your own computer, it's not enough to prevent your account being a target. Especially, if you are using the automatic login system, the possibility to be cheated on your password will increase. Hackers have attempted various ways to get people's information; furthermore, hacking is not such a difficult thing to do. Therefore, we have to recognize that our security isn't perfect any time and we should make a new password frequently.

Another way to protect your account is to avoid using your password for just any request. Recently, many people have been damaged by ".phishing." The technique to steal people's account information is simple but intricate. The criminal sends an HTML e-mail which pretends it comes from the bank (Kim). The form looks just like a real web site, so customers put their information in the fake window without deep concern.

In addition to these ways, we shouldn't forget to check our own account history regularly. And then, if you find a strange record, you should immediately call the customer service center of the bank. If you find it sooner, the bank's response will be better, and your lost money will be recovered.

As online banking becomes popular, many problems can potentially result. Sometimes we have an unexpected and serious problem. To make good use of the online systems, we have to take appropriate steps and have to protect own property from "high-tech" crimes. Sometimes, Internet banking is really useful for us; however, we might lose financial security if we're not careful.

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Works Cited

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Kim, Won, et al. "The Dark Side of the Internet: Attacks, Costs and Responses."

Information Systems 36.3 (2011): 675-705. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO.

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Problem/Solution Essay: Example #2

Sense of Place

"Why did I come here?" This is a question that I have asked myself many times since my family immigrated to America. I was so depressed and frustrated that I really wanted to go back to China after a short period of time. In my mind, I kept thinking that this was not my home. I didn't know how to settle down in this new country. What's more, not only me, but also my parents had the same feeling. Therefore, my family has experienced culture shock. Culture shock is an unavoidable problem that many people need to face and solve when they go to a new country.

As Dr. Carmen Guanipa of San Diego State University, states, "The term, culture shock . . . expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate." Since different countries have different cultures, when people get into a new country, they may encounter different challenges. Because people have different views about beliefs, values, and norms, it is not easy to adjust to a new culture. They can't live in the same way as they did before. Therefore, they will feel strange when they meet situations which are unfamiliar to them, and they don't know how to solve their problems properly. For example, after I came to America, the first big challenge that I encountered was the language. Although I had learned some English before I came here, that was far from enough. Having problems in communicating with other people often makes me worried. When I need to go to study in college, I'm always afraid that I can't understand the courses because college is difficult. Before people come to a new country, they may be excited and enthusiastic. However, when they come to the new country, after short term of being excited, they will encounter difficulties instead of interesting experiences. When people suffer from culture shock, they may feel sad, lonely, dejected and stressed. They may not sleep well. They don't have confidence to do things. These can cause people to have bad health. Consequently, people should take the problem of culture shock seriously and find ways to overcome it.

The first way that people can try is changing their attitude. When people have culture shock, they don't feel comfortable in the new place. They may think the new environment won't accept them, so they don't adjust to the new environment. They may only see the negative side of things. People should try to think about all the things positively. Culture shock can provide a chance for people to redefine their life objectives, though it can make people feel real pain. People can take this great chance to learn and obtain new perspectives. According to Dr. Guanipa, culture shock can let people know more about themselves and activate their creativity. When people can deal with their negative feelings, it's easier to develop a new comprehension of the things that they don't understand. They can try to figure out a suitable way to live in the new place. I try this way when I am affected by culture shock. I tell myself that since I came here, I should accept all the difficulties, though it takes time to overcome them. Actually, I find that living in a new country not only gives

me a new look at life, but also trains my own abilities. A good attitude can help people get through culture shock more easily.

Another way that people can try is to force themselves out into the new environment. Some people don't like to communicate with native speakers or join their activities. They only like to stay at home. It is not a good way to know more about the new culture. Some people like to read the newspaper or watch TV in order to know more about the new place. However, talking with the native speakers is more efficient. People not only can practice the language, but also can know more things about the new place. Through different conversations or activities, people may find some new things which they are interested in about the new place. That is one way that can help people kill their loneliness. For example, I have a friend who is an international student. At first, she was afraid of talking with people because she thought her English was bad and didn't know what kind of topics she should talk about. Even when she was with her host family, she preferred to stay in her own room. Gradually, she found that she was so lonely, and she still knew nothing about the new place. She tried to force herself to communicate with people, and her host family helped her to know more about the new culture. Now, she feels more comfortable in this new place. When people can put themselves into a new culture, they can enjoy the new culture more.

Culture shock commonly happens to people who have to live in a new country. It can have a negative effect on people. Therefore, people should take some positive steps such as changing their attitude and putting themselves into the new environment in order to solve this problem. If people have patience to go through the difficulty of culture shock, they can learn how to interact with a different culture and find that it's a valuable experience for their life.

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Works Cited

Guanpia, Carmen. "Culture Shock." *Amigos*. San Diego State University, 17 Mar 1998. Web. 18 Feb 2011.